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BOSTONIAN  
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VOL. I



BOSTON  
OLD STATE HOUSE

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# WILLIAM BLAXTON

BY

THOMAS COFFIN AMORY.

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A PAPER READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY, NOVEMBER 9, 1880.

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# WILLIAM BLAXTON.

1595-1675.

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FOR several years before Winthrop came in 1630, William Blaxton constituted the entire population of this peninsula, which, until comparatively recent accretions from the sea, and annexation of adjacent places, substantially comprised the area to which attached the name of Boston.

That in this then unbroken wilderness of woods traversed by savages, by wolves and other wild beasts almost as dangerous, he should have been contented to dwell, solitary and alone, exposed to such various perils, with the few planters around too remote to be of help in case of need, is of itself a claim to be remembered. But besides his courage and independence there was much else that was estimable in his character, in his tastes and ways, to justify the place he holds in our regard.

His culture and refinement, his gentlemanly bearing, his fondness for flowers and their patient cultivation, his amiable disposition and ready hospitalities gained him the confidence and friendship not only of the lords of the forest but inspired with respect the Puritan leaders. These noble traits, this love of nature, his sacred calling, his trust and faith, invest whatever relates to him with a peculiar, and, it may be said,

with romantic interest for us, who have assumed the grateful responsibility of preserving and transmitting what is worthy of note in our legendary history.

Whence he came, what motives led him to dwell apart from his kindred and to avoid all intercourse here or at home with society, which he possessed so many graces to adorn and aptitudes to enjoy, has baffled investigation. It remains, and may still be destined ever to remain, an impenetrable mystery. That mystery perhaps it would be presumption for me to hope to elucidate. Some of our ablest local historians have esteemed the task worthy of their thoughtful consideration, and their labors have not been altogether without fruit. Much has been brought to light at least to stimulate curiosity if not to satisfy it.

If diffident of any power to add to the information about him which has been thus gradually accumulating, often some bold hypothesis, if not illogical or improbable, may open paths for future exploration. In common with many others of our associates, one of my favorite branches of genealogical study has been that department of family history which connects our earliest American ancestors with their old world progenitors. One possible clue to Blaxton's I propose presently to submit for your more critical investigation. Should it prove his parentage to be as suggested, it will add another agreeable incident to what already makes him memorable. If not, it may help to discover who his parents were.

Before, however, engaging your attention with what relates to his parentage or youthful associations, it may be well to refresh your memory with what concerns his residence here. For a long period a misapprehension has existed and still lingers in the minds of many who have not studied the subject, that, while our sole inhabitant, his house and gardens were near the end of Leverett street, at Barton's Point, not far from where now stands the Lowell railroad freight station. Although corrected by Mr. Bowditch in his "Gleaner" thirty years ago, and his abode proved beyond possibility of doubt to have been some little distance above the corner of Charles

and Beacon streets, several notices of Blaxton in our public prints, elicited by late commemorations, have reasserted the earlier conclusions which Mr. Bowditch proved to have been a mistake. What is said by the early authorities as to his residence seems sufficiently clear and reliable. After endeavoring to show how the error originated, and what we know of him here, we propose to suggest what may prove his ancestral line.

As he was eighty years of age when he died in 1675, he must have been born about 1595. He graduated at Emmanuel, the Puritan College of Cambridge, from which proceeded so many of our most eminent divines, taking his degree as Bachelor of Arts in 1617, and as Master in 1621. On both these occasions he signed his name William Blaxton, with the x, as appears from the fac similes of his signatures, procured from England by Mr. Tuttle, by whose kindness I am permitted to submit them for your inspection. He also most generously allowed me to use his collection of material, he like myself having made the history of Blaxton his study, when his honored life came to an end.

Blaxton took orders, but had no known cure, being a non-conformist and detesting prelacy, as exhibited in Bancroft and Laud. His canonical coat, which Johnson tells us he continued to wear in America, shows that he was still attached to the English Church, and regarded himself as a teacher of its tenets. Though he rarely preached, and that when advanced in life, the ten large manuscript volumes which he had in his library when he died, may have consisted wholly or in part of sermons of his own composition. They were consumed, with all his other books, and with his house, at Study Hill, soon after his death in King Philip's war. It is said that he had trained a steer for the saddle and used it when he visited Boston, or went down to Richard Smith's fine old mansion, still at Wickford on the Narragansett shore, which was also a favorite resort of Roger Williams. On one occasion when he visited Providence for the purpose of religious teaching, he carried in his saddle bags some of the fine apples for

which his orchard was famous, and distributed them among his very limited audience. They no doubt added an acceptable flavor to his discourses.

Lechford, the lawyer, says in 1635 that Blaxton had lived in Boston nine or ten years. If so, he must have come here as early as 1625. The whole neck of land which contained seven hundred acres and was four miles in circuit, he no doubt considered his own. We now know that he selected for his home the southerly and sunny slope of Beacon Hill, near the back basin of the Charles, and certainly he could not have made a wiser choice. Parker and Corey Hills across the bay, with Charles River, and Muddy and Stony Brooks flowing between them, or on either side, for beaver or fish, he was well placed to procure the choicest food, to raise his apples and roses, and to secure from the Indians or by his own industry the skins which were current money with the merchant. Here he was the less disturbed when Winthrop came, as many of his company preferred the harbor and the neighborhood of Charlestown, in order to be near their associates who had declined to cross over the river.

It is now generally conceded that Blaxton came to America with Robert Gorges, who, in 1623, established a settlement at Weymouth, under a patent of an area of ten miles along the shore by thirty inland. We know that he was empowered in 1629 by John Gorges, the brother of Robert, then dead, to deliver Mr. John Oldham seisin of a grant of five miles under that patent, as far as Saugus, along Charles River. The Gorges patent is reasonably presumed to have been abandoned, or in due form surrendered, before the Massachusetts Bay patent of 1627 issued; but all grants under it must have, in equity, if not in express terms, been reserved. The records of the Company in London and letters of Cradock to Endicott show that importance was attached to these rights, already vested, of the old planters, as they were called, to secure releases of which, if they could, was their policy, but not to recognize their validity while outstanding. If, as seems quite probable, Blaxton had any like legal claim to what was

known as Blackstone's Neck, or Point, he did not allow it to stand in the way of his humanity. Moved to compassion by the great mortality of the colonists at Charlestown, from want of pure water in the summer of 1630, he invited them over to what, from the abundance of its springs, was called by the Indians Shawmut. If he considered himself rightfully entitled to exclusive possession by grant or prescription, he made no hard bargain when he gave his invitation.

Blaxton was admitted a freeman in 1631. In 1633 it was agreed that he should have fifty acres of ground set out to him, near his house in Boston, to enjoy forever. In 1634 he released all except six acres, in a general release of the whole peninsula. That the training-field, or common, then dedicated to public uses, constituted these other forty-four acres—long its approximate area  $43\frac{3}{4}$  acres and ten rods—hardly needs corroboration. In 1635 the Court, then held at Newtown, ordered Nahanton to pay Blaxton two beaver-skins for damage done to his swine by setting traps; and, in 1638, he had a grant of land at Muddy River, for three heads.

In the spring of 1635 he left Boston for the place he so long made his abode—six miles from Providence—on that part of Pawtucket River afterwards called for him the Blackstone. It is generally admitted, that before 1642 he had sold his six acres to Richard Pepys, who, the next year, requested leave to purchase land of the town near Blackstone Point and Beach. But there is no recorded deed of conveyance from him, or from Richard Pepys to anyone else. That in the absence of any such evidence so little should be known of his abode is easily accounted for, especially when we remember the state of the ground about it, or what our Registry was before the days of Mr. Bowditch and our present able conveyancers.

What was first designated Trimountain, and not long afterwards Beacon Hill—the name what is left of it still bears—even down to the present century rose nearly one hundred feet in elevation above its present summit. It covered one hundred acres, was steep and rough, and so

complicated in its slopes that before Thomas Hancock in 1737 erected his spacious mansion near its crest there were upon this large area but few dwellings. Much of it was held in large lots of from two to six acres, and not often changing ownership, less attention was drawn to their record title. When, however, fifty years before Hancock purchased, the Colonial Charter was annulled by the crown, and proprietors under it threatened with the loss of their estates on the pretext that their grants had not been passed under the Charter Seal, the colonists naturally took into consideration what other titles they had which would be respected. Deeds of confirmation of the early conveyances from the Indian Sagamores were obtained from them or their representatives, and depositions *in perpetuum* of the older inhabitants taken for evidence, which might possibly be of use, should attempts be made to carry out these iniquitous proceedings.

Among these depositions was one dated June 10th, 1684, in which John Odlin, aged seventy, and other ancient dwellers and inhabitants of Boston, testified "that about the year 1634 the inhabitants purchased of Mr. William Blackstone his estate and right in any lands lying within the neck of land called Boston, each householder paying six shillings, and some more, excepting six acres reserved by him on the point called Blackstone Point, on part whereof his then dwelling-house stood. After which purchase the town laid out a place for a training field, which ever since, and now, is used for that purpose, and for the feeding of cattle. Robert Walker and William Lytherland further testified that Mr. Blackstone bought a stock of cows with the money, and removed and dwelt near Providence, where he lived to the day of his death.

"Before      S. BRADSTREET.  
                 S. SEWALL."

Another of these depositions, which identifies the site of Blaxton's house as between Charles and Spruce Streets on Beacon Street, and with the grounds set down on the Burgiss



map of 1728 as Banister's Gardens is recorded as follows: (Suffolk Deeds, 26, 84.)

"The deposition of Anne Pollard of Boston, widow, aged about eighty-nine years. This deponent testifieth and saith: that this deponent's husband, Mr. William Pollard, occupied and improved a certain piece or parcel of land situated near the bottom of the Common at the westerly part thereof, in Boston aforesaid, and bounded on the sea south-west, for many years; and that her said husband had hired the same of Richard Peepys, late of Boston aforesaid, gentleman, deceased, who often told this deponent that he, the said Peepys, bought the said land of Mr. Blackstone, clerk, formerly of Boston aforesaid; and further that deponent saith that the said Peepys built a house thereon, wherein this deponent and her said husband dwelt for near fourteen years, during which time the said Blackstone used frequently to resort thereto; and this deponent never heard any controversy between him and the said Peepys about the said land, but that the same was always reputed to belong to him, as this deponent understood; and she further says that soon after the sale thereof, as she supposeth, the said Blackstone removed from this town of Boston; and further saith not.

"ANNE POLLARD.

"Boston, December 26th, 1711."

As Randolph, who represented prerogative in this unholy warfare upon colonial rights, had requested that a portion of the training-field should be set off to him for his residence, this deposition may have been taken to prove existing rights of common in the land, such as were then respected in England, to defeat his purpose. These deeds and depositions, valuable at the time, in the progress of events when their estates were no longer in jeopardy, though on file in the public offices, were not often in mind. The colonists, industrious people of many cares, had too much else to do to study ancient documents. They were in charge of officials, not so open as now to inspection, and if they had been, not easily

understood, as the modes of expression were less plain. The depositions themselves do not exist, and probably were consumed in the Town House in 1747. Nor is it much to be wondered at, that even where recorded they should have rarely been inspected.

All of us accustomed to examine titles either in the Registry or Probate Office before the late improved arrangement of Judge Wright, and the classified indices—when every volume of deeds had its separate index, many of them tattered and torn—must admit that antiquarian or historical enthusiasm might well have shrunk from self-imposed tasks pursued at such disadvantage. Some of the earlier records were in a handwriting difficult to decipher. Professional men able to read them and competent to understand them, cared little to waste their time in researches that earned no compensation. This deposition of Anne Pollard when eighty-seven years of age, taken December 26th, 1711, seems to have long escaped observation. It supplies one of the missing links of the whereabouts of Blaxton's house and his six acres; another being the deed of the Brockatts to Nathaniel Williams, 9, 325.

While preparing a metrical sketch of Blaxton in 1876, to help save the Old South, I endeavored to ascertain in the Registry on what Mr. Bowditch rested his conclusion. I followed back the title of Mr. Copley, who had before 1770 purchased the property, twenty acres and more in extent, all substantially between Beacon and Pinckney Streets, Walnut and the water. This now valuable property passed from Copley to Otis and Mason in 1795.

In working on the Williams title, I found, I am sure, unaided, as Mr. Bowditch had earlier, the deed dated April 14th, 1676, Lib. 9, fol. 325, by which Peter Brockatt, and Mary, his wife, in consideration of the will of her first husband, Nathaniel Williams, and love and affection, conveyed to her children, Nathaniel Williams and Mary Vinal, certain estates in Boston,—among them this: "As also that six acres of land, be it more or less, with the appurtenances thereto ad-

joining and belonging to the said message, known by the name of the Blackstone lot, which was formerly purchased by Nathaniel Williams, deceased, aforesaid, of and from Richard Pepys, of Ashon, in the County of Essex, and Mary, his wife, their act bearing date 30th day of January, Anno Domini Christi, 1655." The elder Williams — whose will was dated 22, 2d mo., 1661, and proved Aug. 1st, 1661 — left his wife absolutely one-third of his estate, valued at £994. It included the Blackstone lot, valued at £150. On Beacon street she resided with her second husband, Mr. Brockatt.

Nathaniel Williams, the younger, held this estate until January 29th, 1708, when, by Lib. 24, fol. 103, he, and Sarah, his wife, conveyed to Thomas Banister, for £130, "all the said Williams orchards and pasture land, containing six acres, at the northwesterly side of the common, or training-field, enclosed and within fences, and the flats lying against the same, down to low water mark, the said upland and flats being butted and bounded on the northwesterly side in part by Charles River and a cove, and partly by the lands of John Leverett and James Allen, on whom it also abuts, to north-east: easterly in part by the land of the said James Allen, and partly on the land of said Thomas Banister: and south-erly by the common, or training-field."

If this lot extended along shore about 1,000 feet, it would have bounded in the common about 340, and, as the tide then flowed up Beacon at least probably 200 feet above Charles street, the area comprised in six acres would have extended to Pinckney street, about 800 feet, where it met the Leverett estate, 1,100 feet from Cambridge street. On the maps of Bonner, 1722, and Burgiss, 1728, these gardens are laid down near the river side. A knob on the water-line indicates a promontory, probably that ending in Fox Hill, about the present junction of Arlington and Beacon streets, some hundred feet in length, which may have been Blaxton's Point.

While the property continued in Nathaniel Williams, the Court records reveal an incident which carries us back to the Blue Laws of Puritan days: John Wheally, servant to Hugh

Mulligan Smith, being arrested, acknowledged that he was yesterday, being the Sabbath, in an orchard at the bottom of the common between bells ringing for the afternoon exercises, when he took and gathered some pears, and then went into a pasture next by, where a negro was keeping sheep, and lay down by him until the constable came and took him. He had gone with him some little way, when he took to his heels and ran. Upon consideration that it was a third conviction, the profanation of the Sabbath, and his escape from the constable, he was sentenced to pay twenty shillings, money fine; or, if his master refused to pay it for him, sentenced to be whipped with ten stripes, and to stand committed till his sentence was performed.

John Banister of Newport, R. I., Samuel of Stoughton, Mass., and Frances Bowes sued Nathaniel Cunningham, who as plaintiff, in review, recovered judgment, 1769, and sold Copley.\*

We do not propose to follow, farther, the title of the Blaxton lot. It stands as follows :

Gorges patent from the Council of ten miles by thirty : Gorges to Blaxton : Blaxton from inhabitants, fifty acres : Blaxton to inhabitants, general release of peninsula except six acres : Blaxton to Richard Pepys, six acres : Richard Pepys to Nathaniel Williams, 1655 : Nathaniel Williams' will to wife, 1661 : Mrs. Brockatt, to Nathaniel Williams and Mary Vinal, 1666 : Nathaniel Williams to Thomas Banister, 1708, 24, 103 : Thomas Banister's heirs were Thomas, Samuel, John who died s. p. June 30th, 1784, Thomas, Chamberlin, Annesley, Samuel, and Frances, wife of William Bowes. The last-mentioned Samuel sold Nathaniel Cunningham, 1733 and died 1744.

Such being the record evidence of Blaxton's home, how could so great an error have originated? On Wood's map the peninsula shoots out a mile and a half into the sea, with broad water-spaces all around it, but where it is connected towards the south and west with Roxbury. From Charles-

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\* See Court Records of 1769.

town elevations it appeared divided by an isthmus into two portions, one was the mill-pond and the town dock, — not far apart at high tide. Wood, in his *New England's Prospect*, M. H. S. C., says, that “about a mile up the river was a small creek, taking its name from Major General Edward Gibbons, who dwelt there some years. On the south side of the river, on a point of land called Blaxton's Point, planted Mr. William Blackstone.”

Johnson, M. H. S. C., 12, 86, informs us that, “on the north side of Charles River, on Noddle's Island, they found Mr. Maverick; a mile higher up on a creek, General Gibbons; and, on the south side, on a point of land called Blaxton's Point, Mr. William Blaxton. To the southeast of him, near Thompson's Island, lived some few planters more. These persons were the first planters in those parts having some small trade with the Indians for beaver-skins.” Both Wood and Johnson, in these descriptions, attach the name of Blaxton to the whole peninsula, as Blaxton Point.

The Charlestown Records were transcribed by John Greene in 1664. The first seven pages compiled by Mr. Greene, from information of known gentlemen that lived and were actors in those times, were approved by the selectmen. On page 380, Young's *Chronicles*, Chap. XIX, which prints this record, we find this passage :

“In the meantime [*viz.*, 1630] Mr. Blackstone, dwelling on the other side of Charles River, alone, at a place by the Indians called Shawmut, where he only had a cottage at, *or not far off, the place called Blackstone's Point*, he came and acquainted the Governor of an excellent spring there, inviting him and soliciting him thither. Whereupon, after the death of Mr. Isaac Johnson (30th September, 1630), and divers others, the Governor, and the greatest part of the church, removed thither.” What, with the one hundred rod ordinance, and commissioners' lines, the configuration of Boston has been so completely changed that it is difficult for us to conceive what it was in Blaxton's days. When the Charlestown records were made up, in 1664, or Pemberton wrote his

topographical account in 1792, what was at the earliest period seven hundred acres, though now thrice that area, was much as nature made it.

No other evidence appears in these earlier authorities to determine whereabouts on the peninsula Blaxton dwelt, unless it be in the phrase in the Charlestown records, "where he only had a cottage at, or not far off, the place called Blackstone's Point." There is no reason to believe that what was afterwards Barton's Point (from James, the rope-maker, 1643-1729, who removed thence to Newton in 1688, and gave it its name), was ever known as Blaxton's Point, except as part of the whole peninsula. We do know that some smaller promontory near his actual abode was called Blaxton's Point. But this may have been the rounded shore, on Burgiss's map, or a projection where Beacon street ended. The new fields on Barton's Point were early laid out and divided, and the proprietors held, in many instances, in large lots, — Governor Leverett holding at least twenty acres. It seems difficult to believe that Blaxton could ever have selected this exposed position on the northeast of the hills; and, certainly in the absence of any record-title, which would justify even a doubt, we may safely say that he never did. The orchards he had planted on the bay opposite what we now call the mouth of Charles River, were already well grown when Winthrop came, as Stephen Hopkins says in his account of Providence.

The first statement discovered, that Barton's Point was ever called Blaxton's, is in the *Topographical and Historical Description of Boston*, by Thomas Pemberton, born 1728, which was published in 1794, in 3d Vol. *Mass. Historical Society's Collections*, 241. He says that "these adventurers, informed by a Mr. Blaxton, said to be the first Englishman who had slept upon the peninsula, and who resided at that part of West Boston now called Barton's Point, of a spring, crossed over."

The next allusion in time, to Blaxton, is by Charles Shaw, in his description of Boston in 1817, p. 103, in which he quotes from the memoirs of the *American Academy*, an article on

the waters of Boston, drawn up by Dr. John Lathrop, in 1800. In this he states that the spring Blaxton mentioned to Winthrop as an inducement to transferring his company to the Boston side, was the spring now to be seen (1800) on the westerly part of the town "near the bay which divides Boston from Cambridge." This, evidently, intended the spring in Louisburg Square. Page 32, he quotes Roger Clap's statement, that the Governor, "viewing Newton or Cambridge, liked that plain neck that was then called Blaxton's Neck now Boston."

Dr. Caleb N. Snow, in his *History of Boston*, published in 1825, mentions Blaxton, but throws no additional light upon where he dwelt, simply quoting what had been said by the earliest writers. He gives, however, a graphic picture of the hundred acres covered by Beacon Hill, 112, and says, "that on the top of one of the peaks near Pinckney, opposite the Charles Street Meeting House, eighty feet above the water, was, and continues to be, a boiling-spring, now open in three places." He speaks of Fox Hill as having disappeared. Dr. Young, in his *Chronicles*, 169, 1846, says, Blaxton resided on Barton's Point; but none of the authorities cited, when tested, support the statement, unless it be Mr. Drake, 1856, who\* was of the opinion that the Blaxton spring might have been one under the house, 19 Poplar street, which he occupied in 1838.

Dr. Shurtleff, in his *History of Boston*, 1871, page 392, mentions a "spring not far from the centre of Louisburg Square, which poured a bountiful supply of water, and which was, unquestionably, the identical spring which yielded its benevolence to Mr. Blaxton, and the earliest inducement that led the fathers of the town to the peninsula." "Another spring flowed on the northwest side of Spring street." By those who supposed Barton's Point identical with Blaxton's, this was considered to be Blaxton's spring. But such was not the case. Blaxton's Point, Dr. Shurtleff says, "was in the

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\* Vide pp. 50, 95, 96, 97, 239, 278, 530, 531, 600.

neighborhood of West Cedar street, between Cambridge and Pinckney streets." "Southeast of this was situated Blaxton's garden, and, not far distant, the memorable spring which supplied him with water." The garden is designated on Burgiss's map as Bannister's garden.

We presume this to be correct and conclusive, though possibly the point intended in Pepys's application may have been the knob on Bonner's map of 1722, represented by a rectangular projection on Burgiss's of 1728. The broad projection of the shore line in front of West Hill was circular, and not what would ordinarily be called a point.

Blaxton is an interesting personage in our history, and his memory will be forever identified with our beautiful pleasure-ground. If any proof be found to show such an association untenable, it must be relinquished without hesitation. But there is not the slightest likelihood that it will.

Before closing I would suggest what seems his possible parentage. Many efforts have been made, from time to time, to ascertain from what branch of his name he descended, but to little purpose. His descendant, Mr. Blackstone, formerly Mayor of Norwich, Conn., made the acquaintance of Sir William, Member of Parliament from Wallingford, grandson of Sir William, the learned commentator on the laws of England, who derived from a branch settled at Salisbury in Wiltshire, but no connection could be traced. The correspondence that passed between them on the subject Mr. Blackstone was good enough to send me. Mr. William Blackstone inclined to the belief that our William was a near kinsman of John Blakiston, the friend of Cromwell, and one of the regicides who died just before the Restoration. Some of the regicide's descendants settled in Maryland, and a branch is believed to be there now.

To this same view, also, inclined Mr. John Houston Blackstone, of Orangefield, Antrim, in Ireland, who is the grandson of Sir Matthew, the Mayor of London, created a Baronet in 1763. He very courteously responded to my inquiries, but could not enlighten me as to what I wished to ascertain.



Information has been sought at Emmanuel College by Mr. Tuttle, but nothing positive has been learned. The County Histories, Extinct Baronetcies, and other genealogical works, reveal, among the various pedigrees, but one individual who, in age and circumstances, corresponds with what is known of our sole inhabitant.

The reasons which lead to my present conjecture that this was our William, have force. If so it should prove, it lends an additional interest — romantic or historical — to what is already known. It seems reasonable to assume that all of the name descend from the well-known stem in the palatinate of Durham, the earliest of whom mentioned — Hugh — was proprietor of Blakiston, about six miles from the episcopal city, as early as 1341, and who married Cecilia Fitzralph. From Roger, his son, descended Sir William, 1388–1418, Lord of Blaxton and Coxhow, whose posterity have been prospered in fortune, and flourished in great honor, not only in Durham, but in many other English counties, and in this country.

“Few families of private gentry,” says Surtees (p. 16, Vol. III), in his *History of Durham*, “have spread more widely, or flourished fairer, than Blackstone; but all its branches — Gibside, Norton Hall, Old Morton, Seaton Hall, and Thornton Hall — have perished, like the original stock. One family alone remains which can trace its blood, without hereditary possessions; and a dubious and distant kindred to the old tree of Blakiston, is asserted by some families who bear the name in the South.”

Surtees (III, 160) says the house of Blakiston reached the zenith of its wealth and honors under John (1535–1586), who married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir George Bowes, and had ten sons and five daughters by her, and by his second wife, Barbara Lawson. He seems to have been the ancient esquire of the old ballad. His uncle was the ancestor of the Blakston of Gibside (Vol. II, p. 255). He made liberal provision for his numerous family. His eldest son, Sir William, born 1553, married in 1581, Alice Claxton, born 1558, and left six sons, all living in 1624, and three daughters. William was the

name of the fifth son, and, if born in 1595, his mother would have been thirty-seven years of age at the time of his birth.

Sir William seems to have been a bold, high-spirited, and somewhat lawless man, for he rescued his cattle from the sheriff's officers, when levied upon by authority of the high commission. His eldest son, Thomas, was created a baronet in 1615, one qualification for the honor being an estate of a thousand pounds a year, and another, payment of a thousand guineas into the royal treasury. He sold part of his patrimony that very year, and, in 1634, conveyed away the last sweepings of the great Blakiston estate. His son, Sir William, the second and last baronet of this creation, is said to have spent himself for the king, and was at one time a prisoner; but Sir Bernard Burke, a better authority than Surtees on the subject, says, the baronetcy became extinct on the death of Sir Thomas.

Sir William, who died in 1418, was succeeded as lord of Blakiston by William Nicholas, 1418-1460, who married Fulthorpe; William, 1438-1468, who married Sybel; Thomas, 1438-1483, who married Killinghall; William, 1465, who married Anne Conyers; Thomas, (d. ? 1557), who married Elizabeth Place; John, 1535-1586, who married Elizabeth Bowes, who had fifteen children; Sir William, born 1533, died after 1624, m. Alice Claxton in 1581.

This Sir William of Blaxton and Wynyard, like the Grahams and Musgraves, and many more of the moss-troopers of the border, set, occasionally, even the sheriffs at defiance, when they disturbed his cattle, and, no doubt, maintained the reputation of his house for courage and hospitality. The house at Wynyard, which came with Alice Claxton, he preferred as a dwelling to that of Blakiston. It was one of the most convenient and handsome mansions in the district, with a fine piece of water stretching along the valley, edged with woods and lawns, with pleasing sheltered wood-walks. The approach was over a handsome bridge, crossing the head of the lake.

Sir William, of Gibside, was also a devoted royalist, as well as another Sir William, his nephew, and Surtees may have confused these many Sir Williams. Knights and beneficed clergymen abounded in the family, and, if as suggested, our William was the son of Alice Claxton, his declining, in the impoverished condition of the family, after having obtained a collegiate education, to conform to the ecclesiastical requisitions, and be beneficed himself, may explain the tradition in the Connecticut line, that their first American ancestor left home from some misunderstanding with his parents.

Our Blaxton married, July 4th, 1659, at Boston, Sarah, widow of John Stevenson, Governor Endicott officiating. We know, from the Suffolk Deeds, that John held a power to collect a claim against persons here, from a lady of Newcastle-on-Tyne. Their only son John settled near New Haven, and his son John, of Branfort, was buried there in 1785, at the age of eighty-five. His son James was a person of official consequence, but did not know, in 1849, that he was descended from the first inhabitant of Boston. This branch have since emerged from comparative poverty, till Lorenzo, the gentleman alluded to as once Mayor of Norwich, is now one of the most prosperous and influential of that city.

If William belonged to the family of Blakiston and Wynyard—if he were the son of Sir William—or belonged to any other branch of the race in the County of Durham—(and I can find no William among their pedigrees who approaches in age to his own, though William, son of William, of Gibside, was born in 1604)—it will be more easy to explain how he should have been so well skilled in woodcraft, venery, and horticulture, and in similar accomplishments, for which there could be no better training than to have been brought up on a large manorial estate in England. The chase and other field sports, in which, when not in war, consisted their daily occupations, prepared his constitution to cope with the exposures and privations of forest-life, and gave him the knowledge and experience required to obtain his food, and to take pleasure in its pursuit. Among the numerous names of

note in Durham at the time, we find Washington, Jefferson, and Madison, and many others famous in our American annals; and there were, as we have seen, various branches of his own name and kindred who occupied hospitable mansions surrounded by parks. In many and all—for such were the social usages of the period—he was a welcome guest; and, before ceasing to weary your attention, I propose to describe a few of them, if I may.

Little remains of the old manor-house of Blakiston; the hall was taken down during the last century. Its site was near the road, with deep meadows on the west, and broken ground sloping to the east. After his marriage with Alice Claxton, Sir William (1550–1625) seems to have abandoned it for Wynyard, his wife's inheritance, and there, probably, his younger children were born. The property consisted of about two thousand acres, and though the Blakistons, from living there, were designated of Blakiston and Wynyard, the two sisters of Alice had an interest in this as well as in other parts of her inheritance.

The most celebrated of the family mansions, however, was, no doubt, Gibside, of which I am tempted, if you are not wearied, to read you a description.

Gibside lies on the Derwent, six miles from Newcastle-on-Tyne, and a like distance from Ravensworth Castle. It remained in the name of Blakiston till the death of the last baronet of that creation, Sir Francis, in 1713, and then passed with his daughter Elizabeth to Sir William Bowes. "It is difficult to convey any adequate idea," says another county historian, "of the beautiful and magnificent scenery of the place. The visitor enters these enchanting grounds by a serpentine road, which, for upwards of a mile, winds through the bosom of a thick forest, sometimes on the brink of a deep ravine, and, at intervals, descending on the easy inclination of the hill, but still embowered with venerable oaks. On issuing from this forest-road, a stately banqueting house appears, seated on a noble elevation. After passing a beautiful piece of water, a delightful landscape bursts upon the view. To the

right rises a sylvan scene of great extent, hanging woods on inclining grounds, from a lofty summit of the hill, to the very skirts of the vale.

"Rising over the woods, as a terminating object to the grand vista, appears a Doric stone pillar, 140 feet in height, surmounted by a colossal figure, the height of twelve feet, of British Liberty. Turning to the left, and looking westward, you behold a broad walk, or terrace, which, at a distance of a mile, leads to a chapel with a rich portico and dome, highly embellished, intended for a mausoleum.

"On the north is a terrace, which only intervenes between the back part of the house and the steep descent into the Lady Haugh, a deep, rich area of pasturage, surrounded by a rapid sweep of the river. Across the Derwent cultivated lands, sloping gently to the water, and variegated with a lofty cliff with irregular swells, enclosures, and scattered woodlands, form a fine contrast to the deep forest masses that almost darken the southern bank. The sylvan beauties of this magnificent landscape are yet sufficiently grand and distinct to harmonize with the noble scenery that surrounds them. The gardens are spacious and well situated. The park is four miles in circumference. The whole scene is rendered more striking from the bleak country that surrounds this chosen spot.

"The mansion-house displays the style of architecture that prevailed about the commencement of the seventeenth century. Over the entrance-porch are the royal arms of James the First, and, beneath, those of Blakiston, quartering Manley and Lambton, his mother's and wife's. In the interior the old drawing-room remains entire. Forms of Samson and Hercules support a large mantel-piece, above which are the arms of the founder. The south front was partially rebuilt by the Earl of Strathmore, his descendant, with a strict regard to its original form, being embattled, and with deep bay windows divided by stone mullions and transoms."

This residence—the home of a family growing into life, consisting of seven young men and boys and four blooming

maidens — must have been singularly attractive to a young collegian, and our Blackstone, if from Durham, must, at least, have seen it, if a near kinsman, as supposed.

We have been tempted to select these descriptions at this time as bearing upon his probable parentage. Certainly no lovelier spot could be found along our own shore than the beautiful site of Boston, with its woods and hills and water, its fields, where the kings of the red men had planted their harvests. The place he selected in Attleboro' was equally beautiful, and such as a lover of nature would select. Study Hill, seventy feet above the river, near the site of his dwelling, commands a fine view of the valley of the Blackstone to the distance of more than a mile. On the east is another delightful and fertile valley which opens to the south on the borders of the meadow. Here was his orchard, and, near by, his grave. His selection of two such lovely homesteads — Shawmut and Attleboro' — indicates a practiced eye and cultivated taste for beautiful scenery, and these he certainly may well have brought from this home of his fathers in Durham.

In the works cited, the surname of our sole inhabitant is variously spelled. Blakiston, Blakeston, Blackstone are the usual modes. Blaxton was the spelling he himself adopted. The name of Claxton, identical with this but in the initial letter, strengthens the probability that William, as suggested, was the son of Sir William and Alice Claxton, as the mode before had been generally Blakiston.

Sham J. C. Amory

## NOTES.

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### BLAXTON IN "MERRYMOUNT."

As the forms of "Blackstone, Boston's First Inhabitant," a poetical tribute to his memory, printed in 1877, were going to press, "Merrymount," read many years ago, came to light from an out-of-the-way corner of the writer's shelves. His attempt to render more familiar to present generations what has been transmitted of the hermit of Shawmut, would have been discouraged, had Motley's vivid and complete account of him been remembered. Some supposed incidents will be found both in the novel and poem; but in the latter they were not borrowed from the former, but suggested by the subject common to both. The reader of the novel will take especial delight in this early scintillation of a genius which has since commanded the admiration of the world. The situation of Blaxton's abode in the book accords with that determined beyond all farther controversy by the deposition of Mrs. Pollard. For the moose-colored bull, on which the novel mounts the sole inhabitant, is claimed historical proof, and his solitude is cheered by a fawn, possibly no creature of the imagination, but an actuality, as the minotaur, supported by evidence.

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### TRADITIONS.

According to tradition, roses of English varieties adorned the garden of Blaxton. In "Merrymount," Motley describes him as riding on a bull. This is possible, since cattle were sent out to the colony at Strawberry Bank, on the coast of Maine, to Cape Ann and Plymouth, between 1620 and 1630; and Maverick, no doubt, had many on his island. That Blaxton broke in a bull to bit and bridle, and scampered upon its back over his domain, then consisting of seven hundred and fifty acres, is not impossible, or, perhaps, improbable; but, as his riding later about his new home at Rehoboth, and in visiting Providence and Boston, on such an animal of the color mentioned, is well authenticated, the earlier bull may be a myth. The text, endeavoring to be historically accurate, reluctantly refrains from an incident, which, if it rested upon more reliable tradition, would add another interesting association with the earliest settlement of our city.

### PROMINENT RESIDENTS ON HIS ESTATE.

"GLEENER," speaking of Blaxton's estate, says "it must have been a sheltered and sunny enclosure of almost unrivalled beauty." In Blaxton's "Vision" in the poetical tribute mentioned above, brief reference is made to a few of the distinguished Bostonians who, in after years, resided upon portions of this estate. Copley owned a large part, including probably most of the "orchard."

The house at the corner of Walnut and Beacon streets was built by John Phillips, first mayor of Boston, and father of the distinguished orator. The father of John Lothrop Motley, when the historian was a boy, lived on Walnut street, opposite the head of Chestnut; Dr. Channing on Mount Vernon, Otis and Prescott on Beacon.

Blaxton in his "Vision" may be supposed to have recognized many other celebrities, local or world-renowned, connected with the future of his farm, whose names are household words. But too many are living to warrant an allusion to them. Francis Parkman and Charles Francis Adams are too widely known for reserve; McLean, whose name attaches to one of our charities he contributed largely to found, and David Sears, whose generous benefactions relieve hundreds of the worthy poor, with scores of more, familiar from their munificence, public service, and local influence, have dwelt or dwell now within its limits.

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### BLAXTON'S ESTATE IN RHODE ISLAND.

Blaxton's orchard in Boston, which, in a publication of 1765, is mentioned as still bearing fruit, was well grown when he left Boston for Rehoboth, where, about his abode at Study Hill, he owned two hundred acres, and more in the neighborhood of Providence. His son John sold to Mr. Whipple, whose descendants still own, or did till recently.

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### HIS INDIAN NEIGHBORS.

Canonchet, soon after the battle of the plains, near Blaxton's abode, in March, 1676, left his army of fifteen hundred men, with a slender following, to procure seed-corn at Seekonk. The 7th of April he was surprised at Study Hill and captured, and was carried to Stonington. He declined all overtures for surrendering his own and his people's territory in exchange for his life, only praying his captors that his death-blow might be speedily given by Uncas, a sagamore of the Pequods. It was not so ordered; but,



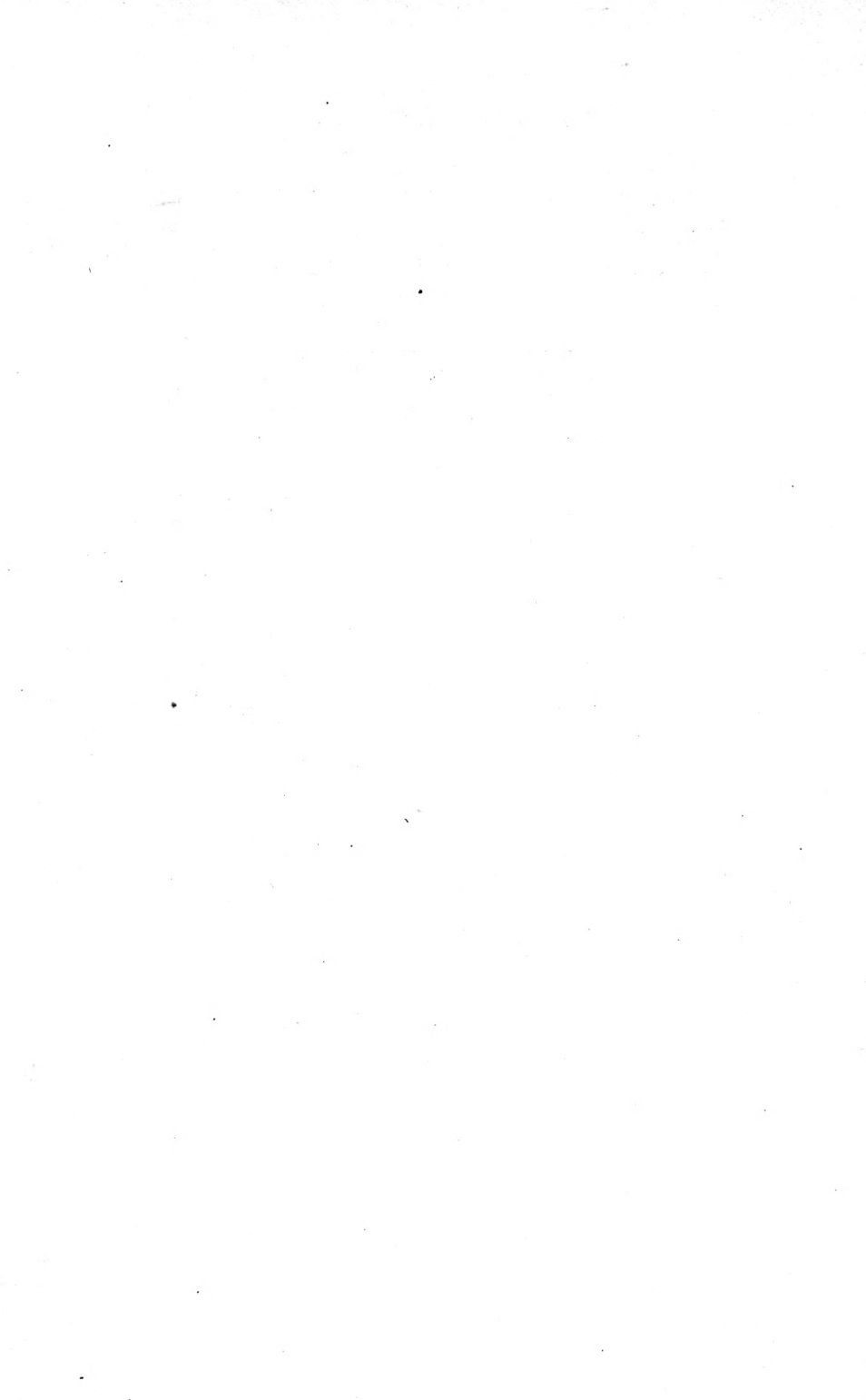
in the presence of Major Denison, the Pequods shot him ; Mohegans cut off his head, quartered and dismembered his body ; Ninnicroft's men burnt the remains, except the head, which they presented to the Council at Hartford. His principal residence, as that of his father, Miantonimo, is believed to have been Taminy Hill, in Newport, his dominions extending over the islands and westerly shore of Narragansett Bay.

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#### BLAXTON'S TOMB.

In the little village of Lonsdale, R. I., for two hundred years has been seen a lonely grave, marked with two white stones ; the elements, long years since have obliterated the inscriptions upon them, but well-founded tradition has designated this grave as that of Rev. William Blaxton, the first settler of Shawmut. Recently, in the presence of Lorenzo Blackstone, of Norwich, a descendant, and President Gammell, of the R. I. Historical Society, the grave was opened. A quantity of bones were found and placed in a suitable receptacle, and when the building, — a large cotton-mill, — is finished, which modern progress renders it necessary to place here, a handsome monument will also be erected over the remains of William Blaxton.





# ABEL BOWEN

BY

WILLIAM HENRY WHITMORE.

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**1887.**

**BOSTONIAN SOCIETY.**





ABEL BOWEN.



ELIZA HEALY.

FROM OLD MINIATURES.



## ABEL BOWEN.

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BY a fortunate accident the Bostonian Society has acquired a number of the copper-plates and wood-cuts engraved by Abel Bowen and used by him in his "Picture of Boston" and other publications. As these engravings are all of historical interest, and the books are all out of print, the Society has voted to republish the plates with explanatory notes.

In pursuing this task the writer was insensibly led to investigate the circumstances under which these engravings first appeared, and consequently, to learn somewhat of the life and work of a man who has peculiar claims to recognition by a society founded for the preservation of Bostonian mementos.

Abel Bowen, for nearly forty years a citizen of Boston, was one in the chain of local antiquaries, beginning nearly a century and a half ago with Thomas Prince, and continued through Pemberton, Shaw, Snow, Quincy, Drake, and Shurtleff, to the present time. In this band of earnest recorders

of our history, Abel Bowen belongs, not only as the artist who preserved for us these pictures of the past, but as the promoter and publisher of Snow's "History of Boston," and of various other similar books and magazines. As so little has yet been written about him, such details as have been collected may well be noted down here.

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The following memorandum preserved in the family, (for a copy of which I am indebted to Mr. W. C. Burrage, Clerk of the Bostonian Society), gives the Bowen pedigree. I add a figure for each generation.

"Thomas<sup>1</sup> Bowen was one of the three brothers who came to this country to settle. He was the father of John<sup>2</sup> Bowen, the father of John<sup>3</sup>, who was the father of John<sup>4</sup>, who was the father of Abel<sup>5</sup> Bowen, my father.

ABEL<sup>6</sup> BOWEN."

BOSTON, June, 1824.

I also find that Abel<sup>5</sup> Bowen, Sr., was born Dec. 14, 1768; married Delia Mason, March 31, 1789, and had Abel, born at Sand Lake Village in Greenbush, N. Y., Dec. 23, 1790; Delia, born July 12, 1792, died July, 1793; Henry, born May 28, 1794; Romeo, born Sept. 16, 1796; Juliet, born May 31, 1798; Sidney, born July 29, 1799; Sophronia, born July 25, 1801; Mason, born June 6, 1802; Lorenzo, born Feb. 28, 1804; Eliza, born June 24, 1805; Mary, born Jan. 1, 1807, and Olonda, born June 6, 1809. He died Dec. 8, 1811, at Otego, N. Y., leaving a widow who long survived him, dying in Milford, N. Y., Oct. 22, 1838, aged sixty-eight years.

Abel Bowen, Jr., had ten children, of whom three sons were, Lorenzo, Daniel, and Edwin; and three daughters, Mrs. Sanderson, Mrs. Phipps, and Mrs. Butts.

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From a very interesting scrap of autobiography still possessed by the family, (for which I am again indebted to Mr. Burrage), it seems that Bowen began his career as an engraver in 1805. The statement is as follows :

"It is well known that Dr. Alexander Anderson of New York was the first to introduce the art into that City, and may be properly styled the father of Wood Engraving in the United States.

"The Introduction of Wood Cuts met with much opposition by Newspaper Printers and others, on account of the liability to warp and crack, they having been in the practice of using the Type Metal Cuts which had been the kind of engraving previously used.

"In Boston, Type Metal Cuts were generally used, and no one attempted to make a business of Engraving on Wood till it was introduced by myself, although it is evident that others had made some occasional attempts to produce Wood Cuts. I have evidence that Dr. Franklin\* engraved some devices on wood, and that some were used in the printing of the Continental Money; and after him a Mr. Aiken, Mr. Skillen, Mr. Callendar and several others executed Wood Cuts, not as a business, but as occasional experiments as suited their convenience and the accommodation of others.

"The first wood-cut I executed in Boston was a profile cut for W. M. S. Doyle, for his advertisement for cutting profiles,

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\* It will be remembered that Franklin states in his autobiography, that when he started in business as a printer in Philadelphia, he "engraved several things on occasion," and especially "several ornaments and cuts for some New Jersey currency." These were doubtless in type metal. A late example is on the title-page of the Rev. Dr. Eckley's discourse before the Boston Female Asylum in 1802. It was printed at Boston at the Ornamental Printing Office, under the Columbian Museum, and bears the monogram D. B. This doubtless refers to the Daniel Bowen of the text. At the end is a tail-piece of much inferior execution. I am informed that these were not engravings made on the type-metal, but that the matrix was cut in wood, and then a cast was made in metal. It seems as if there must have been two distinct systems, because while the earlier ornaments are very rude, some of the later ones are well and elaborately cut, suggesting the idea that they were regularly made types.

which may be seen in the *New England Palladium* of Dec. 17, 1805.\*

"I engraved many cuts while an apprentice at the printing business, some of which were for my Uncle Daniel Bowen proprietor of the Columbian Museum in Boston,† and were used for his Museum bills as early as 1811.

"I made copies‡ of some cuts by Thomas Bewick, the restorer of the Art of Wood Engraving, which my uncle took pains to exhibit to the printers and publishers in Boston,

\* The following fac-simile is given.



The same engraving retouched.

WM. M. S. DOYLE,  
Miniature and Profile Painter,  
TREMONT STREET, Boston, next House north of the  
Stone Chapel, the late residence of R. C. AMORY, Esq.



Dec. 17.

CONTINUES to execute Likenesses, in Miniature and Profile, of various sizes, (the latter in shade or natural colours) in a style peculiarly striking and elegant, whereby the most forcible animation is retained.

Some are finished on composition, in the manner of the celebrated MIEUX, of London.

Prices of Profiles—from 25 cents to 1, 2, & 5 dollars.

Miniatures—12, 15, 18 and 20 dollars.

† Daniel Bowen established a Museum here in 1791 at the American Coffee House, opposite the Bunch of Grapes Tavern, State street. He soon removed to the hall over the School House in Hollis street, and in 1795 was established on the corner of Tremont and Bromfield streets. The building was burned January 15, 1803; renewed on the corner of Milk and Oliver streets, and removed to the lot north of the King's Chapel yard in 1806, where William M. S. Doyle was his partner. There the collection was again destroyed January 16, 1807, but they rebuilt and opened June 2, 1807. Mr. Bowen soon after left Boston, and Mr. Doyle continued until January 1, 1825, when the collection was sold to Mr. E. A. Greenwood. In 1841 Moses Kimball brought back to the old site on the corner of Bromfield street, the remains of this Museum and several others.

‡ Mr. Burrage has called my attention to Low's Almanac, printed at Boston, by Munroe & Francis. In the issue for 1811, is a cut signed with Bowen's monogram; in that for 1817, is one signed Bowen, and another marked N. D., doubtless Dearborn's. In 1819 there are several cuts as headings in the months marked Bowen, or B, and they continue through 1822. They seem to be copies or imitations of Bewick.



*D. Bowen*

JOSEPH KYLE, PINX.



many of whom were pleased to express compliments in favor of the specimens, and a desire to have me make it a business, for there was no one established in the Art in the City.

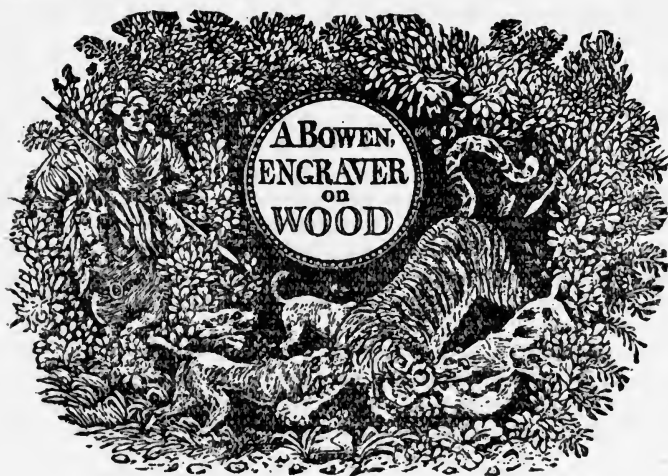
"This\* led me to engrave and issue a Cut, (the Tiger Hunt) for a Card, in the early part of 1812†, soliciting patronage at the Museum while I executed my Engravings at Brighton, where my uncle resided. After engraving a number of Cuts and finding a ready sale for them, I determined on making Engraving a business, took a room in Tudor's Building in Court street, and commenced in August, 1812, by doing a cut of a Model of a Boat for Mr. Frederick Tudor, and advertised to do Engraving on Wood in Boston.

"I immediately received orders from the principal publishers in the City, such as Messrs. T. B. Wait, Caleb Bingham, Cummings & Hilliard, Munroe & Francis, Lincoln & Edmands, West & Richardson, Adams & Rhodes, Benjamin Russell, and others, most of whom had urged my making Wood Engraving a business, as no one, as they said, had ever attempted it in Boston.

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\* He forgets to mention an earlier specimen, being a ticket for a Ball at Hudson, N. J., September 14, 1811, where he was one of the managers. It bears his initials, A. B., as engraver.

† See the annexed fac-simile.



"The patronage thus bestowed on me, led Mr. Gershom Cobb, a writing master, to issue a card, as he had made cuts occasionally, by way of experimenting.

"This was soon followed by N. Dearborn,\* originally a book-binder and book-seller, then a grocer, to issue a Hieroglyphical Card, as having opened in Water Street. Mr. Cobb soon relinquished the business altogether, leaving the whole to Mr. Dearborn and myself. After this a degree of rivalry ensued between us, and the progress each made may be seen by the work produced.

"Mr. Shaw when about to publish his Description of Boston, gave each two cuts to do, the Church of Christ in Salem St., and the Triangular Ware House, to Mr. Dearborn; and the Old and New State House to me;† and any one who wishes can see the state of the Art in Boston at that period by examining the work.

"And to show the progress I made in Engraving on Wood, I would refer to a Cut placed at the head of an Elegy on the Death of Lawrence, killed in the battle between the Chesapeake and Shannon, the cuts in the Naval Monument, Snow's History of Boston, the Picture of Boston, and The Young Ladies' Book, all of which were published by myself.‡

\* Nathaniel Dearborn is best known by his volume entitled "Boston Notions," published in 1848. In the preface he reprints an advertisement of a similar work which he projected thirty years before. This notice, from the New England Palladium of June 24, 1814, has a wood-cut of a painter's pallet, and below it is the inscription: "Nathaniel Dearborn, Engraver on Wood, School Street, Boston." The circular refers to "the new style of engraving in this part of the country," which Mr. Dearborn explains in a foot-note as "that of Engraving on Wood, introduced into Boston in the latter part of the year 1811, by the Author of this work." It will be seen that this claim was not made till 1848, and I presume it led Mr. Bowen to write out this statement. Bowen's date of 1805 for his first work ante-dates Dearborn by six years. However the first efforts of both artists were quite trifling and obscure. Bowen seems however, best entitled to the credit of priority.

† Mr. Bowen neglects to add that he also engraved for this book a View of Faneuil Hall, and that all these cuts were the size of the page. In addition, Dearborn engraved a view of the Julien House. Bowen's cut of the Old State House was afterwards used as the frontispiece to Hale's "Survey of Boston," in 1821.

‡ These are noticed later.

"Soon after the latter book appeared, Mr. Dunlap's work on the 'Arts in the United States' was issued, in which he gave me the credit of introducing the Art of Wood Engraving into Boston.\* The statement made by Mr. D. was from a knowledge of the circumstances I have here related, obtained from what was generally understood in Boston, not from any information he got from me, for he made no application to me on the subject. The public must judge whether Mr. Dunlap's statement is correct, and who was the first to introduce the Art of Engraving into Boston, and bring it forward to take rank with other cities in the United States.

"Much credit awarded to me in the Art, is no doubt due to the pupils who have been in my employ, some of whom I am proud to say have become distinguished Artists, and do great credit to the country; Croome, Hartwell, Devereux, Brown, Billings, Kelly, Andrews, and several others.†

"ABEL BOWEN."

The tribute to Lawrence, mentioned by Bowen, is a broad-side ‡ about 13 inches by 8 inches, the lower half being an

\* See Dunlap, Vol. II, p. 9: "Of the introduction of wood engraving into Boston, the credit is due to Mr. Abel Bowen, who began there in 1812, and has continued the pursuit successfully; he has had several pupils of ability, (Mr. Hartwell and others) who now that the art is becoming more generally understood, receive every encouragement in their professional practice."

See also, Vol. II, p. 254.

† This list can be extended by the following undated memorandum found among Bowen's papers.

"Persons who have received instruction in the art of engraving. Charles Putnam, George Fowle, Sidney Bowen, Childs, Swett, Kelly, [S. S.] Kilburn, Joseph Andrews, Alonzo Hartwell, Crosman, Ruggles, Brown, Hammatt Billings, D. Bowen, Wait, Lloyd, William Munroe, Mudge, George Willis, Devereux, Emmons, Brown, William Croome, Hall (at Cooperstown), and Perkins."

‡ The copy in the possession of the Bostonian Society has the following quaint note printed on a slip of paper.

"I wish you to take the Proposal and go round evenings, or when Mr. Clark can spare you, and get what subscribers you can, and then let me know what No. of copies I must send. The Satin comes very high, and I do not wish to send any more than I am sure to get sale for. I will make a present of one to Mr. Clark, and, if it should be agreeable, I should like to have him put his name

elegy (two columns of verse), and the upper half representing a monument, being a square base with an oval vase thereon, surmounted by a bust of Lawrence. A weeping female probably personifies Columbia, and the usual accessories, flags, etc., complete the picture. The block is about eight inches by six, and is entirely creditable to the artist.

It is marked "Published according to the Act of Congress. A. Bowen, Printer."

As to the "Naval Monument," of which Bowen speaks, it was published by him in 1816, and sold by Cummings and Hilliard.

The illustrations are :

SUBJECT.	DESIGNER.	ENGRAVER.
1* Frontispiece.	J. R. Penniman.	W. B. Annin.
2* Constitution escaping.	M. Corne.	W. Hoogland.
3 Constitution and Guerriere.	do.	A. Bowen.
4 do. do.	do.	do.
5 Wasp and Frolic.	do.	do.
6 United States and Macedonian.	A. Bowen.	do.
7 Java and Constitution.	M. Corne.	do.
8 Hornet and Bonne Citoyenne.	—	do.
9 Hornet and Peacock.	M. Corne.	do.
10* Chesapeake and Shannon.	do.	Wightman.
11 Enterprise and Boxer.	do.	A. Bowen.
12* 1st View of Perry's Victory.	do.	W. B. Annin.
13* 2d do. do.	do.	do.
14 Capture of the Essex.	do.	A. Bowen.
15 Peacock and Epervier.	T. Birch.	do.
16 Wasp and Reindeer.	E. Corne.	do.
17 Wasp and Avon.	do.	do.
18* McDonough's Victory.	do.	W. Hoogland.
19 President and Endymion.	do.	A. Bowen.
20 Constitution, Cyane and Levant.	M. Corne.	A. Anderson.
21 Hornet and Penguin.	do.	A. Bowen.
22 Hornet's escape.	do.	do.
23* Bainbridge's squadron.	J. B. Fanning.	G. G. Smith.

on, for a beginning, and present it to the patrons of the Reading-Room. The Proposals have done very well in this town. It is probable I shall do tolerably well in N. York. You will have 12 cts. for each sub."



It will be noticed that seven are copper-plate engravings, marked with a star in this list, and fifteen are wood-cuts, made by Bowen. They are all very good works of art, and, had the art of printing wood-cuts at that time been well understood, these cuts would bear comparison with work done now.

In 1836 a new edition of the book was announced, continued down to that date; but the volume is only a reprint of the old work. It is not a re-issue, but a reprint. The cuts and plates seem to be the ones used before, but they are very badly printed, and have apparently been injured in parts.

Very curiously, among the wood-cuts bought of Bowen's heirs by the B<sup>o</sup>stonian Society, are several reproductions of these cuts on a reduced scale. I have not yet found them in use in any book, and very possibly they were intended for some enterprise which never succeeded.

Among the miscellaneous cuts done by Bowen, probably before 1820, I would mention one of the Exchange Coffee House in Boston, which building was burnt down Nov. 3, 1818. This is marked "S. Dearborn, del., A. Bowen, sc." A copper-plate engraving "Wightman, sc.," was used on the paper of the hotel. I have also a wood-cut of the "Columbian Hotel" — locality unknown — from the Bowen family papers.

Mr. F. Blake, of Boston, has a large cut made by Bowen, for Elijah Fairbanks of Worcester, to be used on a wrapper for writing paper. It has a view of an old mill, which was burned in 1827.

He also made a cut of the Bible and Heart for Charles Ewer, of 51 Cornhill, a well-known publisher, a copy of which is in a publication dated 1818.

The B<sup>o</sup>stonian Society has a number of blocks by Bowen, some of which may belong to this period, but none seem deserving of reproduction.

Bowen, also, during this period, practiced his art on copper plates. I have noted a portrait of Wesley, prefixed to "Extracts from his Journals," etc., Boston, 1819. This is engraved in line and stipple.

Bowen came to Boston in August, 1812, and it appears that he immediately made plans to begin the printing business with his uncle Daniel as a partner, and a cousin, Abel Bullock, as an apprentice.\* It is not probable however that the arrangements proposed resulted in success, or were of long duration.

In 1816 the Directory names Abel Bowen as an engraver on wood. In 1821 Abel Bowen and Alexander McKenzie were associated as copper-plate printers; but the partnership was brief, though the latter is named in the Directory until 1833. In 1823, George P. Bowen, copper-plate engraver, is at the same address as Abel.

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\* We insert the following interesting letter, written on his arrival at Boston, from the original, belonging to Mrs. Benj. Phipps.

Boston, Aug. 27, 1812.

To Miss Eliza Healy, Hudson, N. Y.

I have had a pleasant journey of four days to this place, arriving on Friday, the 21st inst. On Saturday I went to the Museum, and inquired for Daniel Bowen, my uncle; was informed he lived in Brighton, to which place I went in the stage; was introduced to a cousin, Abel Bullock, who lived with him. Sunday, the 23d, went to church with them. On the 25th Mr. and Mrs. D. Bowen expressed their anxiety to have me start the job and ornamental printing business in Boston, under the firm name of D. and A. Bowen, and take my cousin and teach him the trade. On Wednesday, the 26th, Mr. and Mrs. Bowen, Mr. Bullock and myself took a hack and went to town to make further arrangements. We spent an afternoon with Capt. Moore, of the Navy. On the 27th arrangements were made. My uncle is to have a room leading from the hall of the Museum and move his office in there. Then I am to take the office with a bedroom, with my cousin to help, and do the best I can with it. He is to furnish paper and other things to commence with. My uncle and myself are to share equally in all we make by printing, and all I receive from painting and engraving is to be my own. This P. M. went to Commencement. I left Capt. Moore in Boston, who is to sail in a few hours with Mr. Bullock on board, who goes to Hillsdale to see his parents, and return the next trip. To-morrow go to prepare for removing the press. Shall have no rent to pay, and every convenience for keeping bachelor's hall, and I think I shall do well, if I keep my health. Let it be as it may; I think it will be better than to have gone a soldiering. I date my letter in Boston because there is no post-office in Brighton. \* \* \*

A. B.

The lady to whom this was addressed subsequently became his wife. From the letter it would seem that his proposed office adjoined the Museum. His reminiscences quoted on p. 33 *supra*, written much later in life, differ slightly from the statements here; but these, having been made at the time, are no doubt more correct.

Not long after Shaw's book appeared, Abel Bowen conceived the idea of a new history, in which the illustrations were to be a marked feature. He had been collecting materials for some time, and, in the spring of 1822, he arranged with Mr. John Foster, Jr., to compile the text. Disputes occurred between the partners, and, in April, 1824, Bowen, who had bought the copyright of Shaw's book, and engaged the services of Dr. Caleb H. Snow, as editor, issued proposals for his new history. Mr. Foster attempted to prepare a rival issue, to be printed by Mr. Edward Cotton, but it seems to have been unsuccessful.

Snow's history was issued in parts, and a copyright was obtained for the whole book, Nov. 28, 1825. Great as is the praise due to the compiler of this admirable history, at least equal honor is due to Bowen, as the originator and supporter of the scheme, and as the artist who selected and prepared the valuable illustrations. These comprised seventeen full-page views (nearly all copper-plates), three maps, and nine wood-cuts, and they give a very favorable impression of Bowen's skill both as an engraver and as an artist.

In 1825 quite a stimulus was given to local art, by the introduction of lithography. In the *Boston Magazine* for December in that year, pp. 378-384, is an account of Senefelder's discovery of the process. It adds that nothing had been done to introduce it in this country, unless a few attempts in New York may be verified, "until within a few months, when Mr. John Pendleton commenced an establishment for lithography in this city." He "is a young gentleman of taste and talents, from the State of New York, who was on a visit to Paris, on business of an entirely different nature, and, becoming pleased with lithography, put himself immediately under the first artists of France, and acquired, as we believe, a thorough knowledge of the art and the principles on which it is founded. With this stock of information, and with a great love of the profession, and in addition a good supply of the proper stone and other materials for the pursuit of the art, he came to Boston and engaged with his

brother, a copper-plate printer of established celebrity. With great liberality he has furnished stone, chalk, and pencils to several painters, who are making great progress in lithographic drawing. The sketch which is given in this number of our magazine is merely a specimen of the art amongst us. Messrs. Edwards, Johnson, Hoogland, Penniman, and Alexander, artists well known in this city, are engaged in doing something in lithography to exhibit to the public, which may soon be expected to appear, and others will, no doubt, follow their example. We shall, from time to time, not only keep our readers apprised of the progress which our enterprising and gifted artists are making, but also of what has been done and may be doing; and often present our patrons with specimens of the art itself in our pages."

In this magazine appeared lithographic portraits of Jacob Perkins and Eleanor Davis, both drawn by [Thomas] Edwards; and of Maria Edgewood, drawn by [F.] Alexander; all lithographed by Pendleton.

In the Boston *News-Letter* of Nov. 5, 1825, mention is made of the new art, and notice given that an edition of Sir Astley Cooper's Lectures would soon appear with plates "which have been drawn on stone by A. Bowen and lithographed by Mr. Pendleton."

Bowen was, in 1825, a partner of William S. Pendleton, and the firm was dissolved Jan. 31, 1826, evidently amicably. Pendleton continued lithographing, with his brother, and Bowen returned to engraving.

This is not the place to trace the history of lithography, but it may be added that William and John Pendleton advertised in the Directory through 1830, being then in "Graphic Court, Washington street, opposite the end of Franklin street, and near the Marlboro' Hotel." From 1831 to 1836 (in the latter year at 208 Washington street, between Franklin and Summer streets) William S. Pendleton continues alone, and his name disappears in 1837. On the cover of the Directory for 1837, Thomas Moore, of 204 Washington street, advertises as the successor to Pendleton.

In 1830, in the Directory, is an advertisement of the Sene-felder Lithographic Co., of 123 Washington street, signed by Hazen Morse, Thomas Edwards, William B. Annin, George G. Smith, and John Chorley.

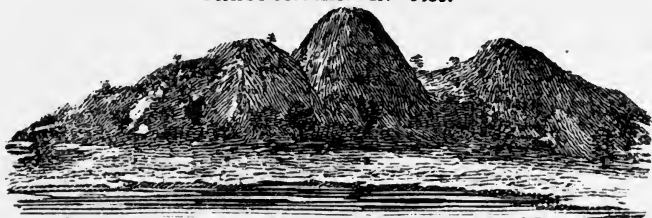
We may here note, on the evidence of the Directory, that John Cullum was, in 1826, a copper-plate printer, William Hoogland an engraver from 1822-1828, and William F. Stratton an engraver from 1829-1833.

In the years 1825-6 Bowen published two volumes of "Bowen's Boston News-Letter and City Record," edited by Dr. Jerome V. C. Smith, afterwards mayor. It was an antiquarian journal of much merit, as well as a useful compendium of the doings of the City Government.

In 1828 a second edition of Snow's History was issued; but it was merely a method of disposing of the remaining copies of the first issue, as the preface shows. Pp. 393 and 394 were reset, pp. 395-424 added, and a new Index, pp. 425-427, prepared.

In 1829 Bowen issued the first edition of his "Picture of Boston, or Citizen's and Stranger's Guide to the Metropolis of Massachusetts, and its Environs," a duodecimo volume of 252 pages. Although the title says it is "embellished with engravings," only a few little cuts are to be found in it.

"The glory of children are their fathers"  
FRIMOUNTAIN IN 1630.



Second Centennial Celebration of the Settlement of Boston.  
Sept. 17. 1830.

In 1830 at the time of the celebration of the Bi-Centennial Settlement of the town, Bowen prepared a badge, a copy of which is in the cabinet of our Society. The cut is given above.

In 1830 Dr. Snow issued "A Geography of Boston," with "Historical Notes . . . . for the Younger Class of Readers," which he intended to be an abridgment of his larger history. To this Bowen contributed various cuts, some new and others perhaps reduced from his larger plates. The best one, perhaps, is a view of the Old State House, under its new name of the City Hall, it having been so dedicated on Sept. 17, 1830. In the foreground, on State street, is a pump, concerning which the following note from Bowen's manuscripts is in place: "The Old State House was painted white in August, 1825, by the city, and in the same month a well was dug at the east end, and good water found, and a plenty, after digging 18 or 20 feet." Before this time there had been a flight of steps at the east end which must have nearly covered this spot. The "old Town Pump" can therefore hardly be located here earlier than 1825.

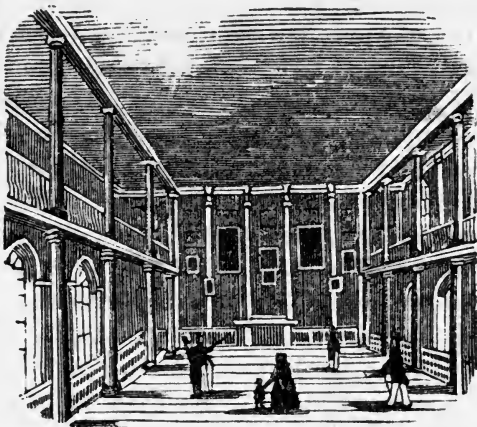


The annexed cut is also from the Geography, and represents the birth-place of Franklin, on Milk street. Another noticeable picture is that of the Tremont House, then just built, showing a cupola on it, which was soon removed. The Great Elm on the Common, near "Crescent Pond," is shown, and also the monument to the parents of Franklin. Another cut shows the first few feet of Bunker Hill Monument in process of erection; and on p. 159 is one representing the Quincy Railway employed for the carrying of stone.

In 1833 Bowen issued the second edition of his "Picture of Boston," wherein, besides wood-cuts, appeared several of the plates of churches, which are appended to this pamphlet. Four of these plates (sixteen subjects), and also the two beginning respectively with the City Hall and the Odeon, were in this edition. It is interesting to note that the third subject on the first plate, in 1833, was "Merchants' Hall," which was effaced and replaced in the later edition by the "Bethel." Merchants' Hall, Bowen states, is "at the corner

of Congress and Water streets ; it is a large, plain building of brick, four stories in height. The lower floor is occupied as a market, and the upper stories for printing-offices and various other purposes." On p. 209 is a cut of the Warren Theatre, corner of Portland and Traverse streets ; on p. 289, a view is given of the Savin Hill Hotel, both of which seem peculiar to this edition.

For a long time, Bowen was engaged in preparing a new edition of Snow's History, of which the two cuts here given are perhaps the only remaining memento. They are numbered "No. 9, p. 17," and "No. 10, p. 18." The first, the



interior of Faneuil Hall, is quite interesting, and far less common than the exterior views. Bowen used a very similar view of the second, Quincy Market, on a larger scale, perhaps more than once.



It is very irritating to think that the great number of drawings, and other materials, collected with so much care by Bowen, were utterly dispersed and lost after his death.

From an undoubted authority it seems that enough manuscripts to fill several barrels were thus allowed to be ruined by neglect and eventually to be burnt. To this loss the antiquary has also to add

that caused by the great fire of 1872, when all the woodcuts used in the old Almanacs and early periodicals also disappeared. The present generation must treasure its recollections for the benefit of posterity.

In 1834 Bowen entered upon an enterprise which must have taken the greater part of his attention for several years.

By chap. 124 of Acts of 1834 there were incorporated as the Boston Bewick Company, John H. Hall, Abel Bowen, and John C. Crosman, with their associates, "for the purpose of employing, improving, and extending the art of engraving, polytyping, embossing, and printing," with power to hold real and personal estate to the extent of \$120,000. The act is dated March 27, 1834. In their advertisement, a month or two later, they state that the company is named in honor of the late Thomas Bewick, "the restorer of the art of engraving on wood." Freeman Hunt was made their agent, and the following artists state that orders for them may be sent to him: Abel Bowen, Alonzo Hartwell, John H. Hall, William Croome, George W. Boynton, John C. Crosman, Daniel H. Craig, and N. B. Devereux, Jr.

In the fire of Sept. 24, 1835, on Court street, the Boston Bewick Company was burned out; but its advertisement remained in 1836. In 1835 the company began to publish *The American Magazine*, a periodical, which for several reasons deserves to be carefully considered. It lived through three volumes, the first two, at least, being issued under the control of the Bewick Company. In Vol. I, page 508, it is stated that "the company of engravers on wood in Boston and by whom those for this magazine are prepared, under the superintendence of Mr. A. Bowen, have taken the name of Bewick, from respect to the person above named," *i. e.*, Thomas Bewick. Again, in the valedictory address of the anonymous editor, in August, 1836, at the end of the second volume, he complains that "the embellishments have chiefly been selected by the executive officers of the Boston Bewick Company, or by the engravers themselves." The third volume begins with October, 1836, and ends with September,



1837, the publisher being John L. Sibley. In the last monthly part (p. 459) is a full-page engraving by A. Bowen, of "Mazzeppa"; and on page 397 is a large cut of an "American Short-Horn Bull," likewise signed by him. These furnish the proof that Bowen's interest in the magazine continued to its close. His initials are on the portrait of La Fayette, on p. 21 of the first volume, thus identifying him with the entire enterprise.

The magazine was intended to be instructive, and its range embraced everything but fiction. The wood-cuts were numerous, and especially illustrated articles on zoölogy and botany. But there are also many views of noted places and buildings in our own country, not a few being those in Boston and its vicinity. A list of the latter is given to aid the students of our local history, and for the further reason that Bowen is certainly entitled to the credit of this department.

In the first volume are the following wood-cuts, all relating to Boston when not otherwise specified: p. 9, Entrance to Mount Auburn; p. 17, large view of Trinity Church; p. 18, small view of Old Trinity; p. 51, House of Industry, South Boston; p. 81, Hancock House; p. 83, Unitarian Church, Cambridgeport; p. 86, ship "Constitution," at the Navy-yard; p. 157, Massachusetts General Hospital; p. 183, Bunker Hill Monument; p. 201, Harvard College; p. 221, Boston Massacre; p. 254, Durant's Balloon Ascension from Boston; p. 279, ruins of the Convent at Charlestown; p. 289, Adams Temple at Quincy (J. Kidder, *del.*); p. 373, portrait of Gov. Bowdoin; p. 408, Mr. Bennet's house at Brighton; p. 479, large view of New South Church; p. 492, large view of Tremont-street Mall; p. 512, Braman's Bath-house.

In Volume II there are the following: p. 34, large view of the Seamen's Church; p. 35, small view of the Old Seamen's Church; p. 42, State Prison, Charlestown; p. 55, large view of Faneuil Hall; p. 68, large view of the State House; p. 80-81, Old Feather Store, Triangular Warehouse, and the Julien House; p. 101, Fort Independence; p. 155, Fresh Pond, Cambridge; p. 157, Tremont street, west from School

street ; p. 234, view in Mount Auburn, Cambridge ; p. 237, the Hutchinson House ; p. 316, large view of Destruction of Tea in 1772 (sketched by G. L. Brown) : p. 413, large view of Grace Church ; p. 497, Trinity Church, from the west corner ; p. 501, Suffolk Bank.

Volume III opens with a large view of Boston, from South Boston (Brown, *del.*) ; other cuts are : p. 65, Monument to John Harvard ; p. 89, large view of the New Court-House ; p. 129, large view of Mt. Washington House, South Boston ; p. 140, Worcester R. R. Depot ; p. 169, large view of the Maverick House ; p. 244, McLean Insane Asylum ; p. 325, U. S. Marine Hospital, Chelsea ; p. 404, Bunker Hill Monument in its unfinished state ; p. 432, Washington Elm, Cambridge ; pp. 449 and 451, large views of the Adams houses, in Quincy.

We have been thus particular in noticing these engravings, because the magazine seems to have dropped out of sight of collectors. Undoubtedly its success among the young, and its wealth of illustrations, led to the destruction of copies at an early date.

The Bewick Company issued in 1835 a map of Boston, 31 by 22 inches, and the border enclosing it is made up of neat outline views of various public buildings in the city.

Late in 1837, or early in 1838, Bowen issued the third edition of his "Picture of Boston," rearranging and increasing its contents. In this edition he seems to have added the last two plates, which are herewith reissued, viz., those beginning respectively with the Brattle-street Church and the New North. A ninth plate is also found in this edition, the subjects being the Tremont House, Norfolk House, Nahant Hotel, and Bunker Hill Monument ; but this plate has not been recovered.

In 1849 Bowen prepared his "New Guide to the City of Boston and vicinity," published by James Munroe & Co. It was a small affair, only filling thirty-six pages, and refers inquirers to his History and Picture. In the preface he mentions that a new edition of the History is in preparation. It

is understood that the late Samuel G. Drake was to be the editor of the re-issue; but the long-continued illness of Mr. Bowen put an end to that project. Later on Mr. Drake began the issue of a new history, the first part appearing September 1, 1852. Although that gentleman had acquired Dr. Snow's manuscript collections, since transmitted to the present writer, he constructed his history on an entirely different plan. Whatever may be the merits of Mr. Drake's unfinished work, neither that book nor the more miscellaneous collection known as the "Memorial History of Boston" can obscure the merits of Snow's volume.

One of the survivors of the artists of the last generation has kindly favored us with his recollections of our subject. "Bowen," he says, "was the real founder of the art of wood-engraving here, not so much by his own productions as by the stimulus he gave to the subject. He was an enthusiast, always projecting works to be illustrated in this manner, and, though rarely making a profit for himself, he was thus the cause of much being done. He was self-taught, copying the designs and methods of those English examples which inspired him. Before his time engraving on copper and type-metal had been done here with fair success. But the aims, processes and results of wood-engraving were so well perceived and achieved in this city, that for years it possessed almost a monopoly of the business. And," our informant adds, "the work done a half century ago was really good in style and manner; so that to-day the greatest advance noticeable is mainly due to improvements in printing, paper and ink. That Bowen was unable to command the means to succeed largely was the misfortune of the times; that he should have struggled on, year after year, in the face of reverses, poverty, and long-continued illness, is the highest proof that he possessed that spark of vital energy which we call genius."

Abel Bowen died March 11, 1850.

In one of the newspapers of the date appeared the following brief notice: "Although a sketch of the life of Mr. Bowen

will undoubtedly soon be published, yet we cannot allow this opportunity to go by without bearing our tribute to the memory of the Man, the Philanthropist, and the Christian. For two years he has borne, with hopeful yet resigned patience, the progress of the disorder, which was to him only as the gradual opening of that gate by which he should pass in, joyfully and triumphantly, to the full radiance of the Eternal Presence. No murmur ever escaped his lips, no discontent appeared on his countenance. 'It is pleasant to see your faces,' he said to the group around him, a few hours before his death; 'but I shall soon see the face of my heavenly Father.' And joyfully indeed did his long-imprisoned spirit seem to burst from the helpless and shattered frame. He died without a struggle, and with a calm smile, which told of trust in God and peace with all mankind."

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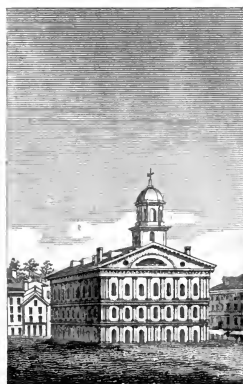
Mr. Burrage has obtained from Mrs. Phipps, miniatures of Abel Bowen and Eliza (Healy) Bowen, his wife, finely painted on ivory, heliotype reproductions of which form the frontispiece of this paper; the portrait of his uncle Daniel, who is mentioned on page 38, is reproduced from a painting by Kyle, and has until recently been in the possession of a descendant, Mrs. Isaac T. Jones, of Philadelphia.

On the following pages will be found brief descriptions of the plates mentioned on page 42, and impressions from electrotypes of selections from Bowen's original wood-cuts, in the possession of the Society.

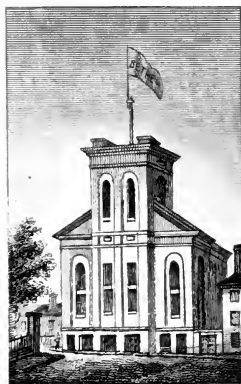




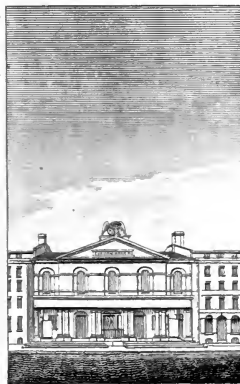
CITY HALL.



FANEUIL HALL.



BETHEL.



CUSTOM HOUSE.

*Drawn and Engraved for Bowers' Picture of Boston.*

1. The CITY HALL, better known as the old State-House, built in 1712 on the site of a still older house; injured by fire in 1747; disused by the State, January 11, 1798; occupied as a City Hall 1830-1840; used for business purposes till 1881; renovated and restored in 1882. The halls, of the greatest historical interest, are now in charge of the Bostonian Society.

2. FANEUIL HALL, given to the town Sept. 10, 1742, by Peter Faneuil; greatly injured by fire, January 13, 1761; rededicated March 14, 1763; rebuilt in 1805, doubling the width of the area, and adding a third story.

3. The BETHEL CHURCH, North square, was founded by the Rev. E. T. Taylor, a Methodist minister, in 1829. The foundation of this building was laid October 3, 1832. Father Taylor was especially devoted to the spiritual care of the seamen of this port, and was very successful.

4. CUSTOM-HOUSE. In 1810 the Custom-House was removed from the corner of Flag alley and State street to a new building in Custom-House street. In 1847-9 the present building was completed and occupied, but the former edifice retains nearly the appearance here presented.

5. THE ODEON. This is the Federal-street Theatre. The first building was opened Feb. 3, 1794, burnt and rebuilt in 1798, closed in 1833, and its name changed to the Odeon. In 1846 it again became a theatre, and in 1852 it was torn down to make room for stores. A narrow alley behind the theatre and the other buildings on Federal street, from Franklin to Milk street, was widened, and became Devonshire street.

6. TREMONT THEATRE, on Tremont street, built in 1827, sold in 1842 to a Baptist Society; it was thenceforward known as the Tremont Temple. It was burnt in 1852, and again in 1879, but has maintained its present front for some thirty years.

7. THE ATHENAEUM. This view represents the dwelling-house of James Perkins, on Pearl street, given partly by him, in 1822, in aid of the society. In 1849 the library was removed to its present building on Beacon street. Business changes and the great fire have removed all traces of the Pearl-street building.

8. STATUE OF WASHINGTON. This statue was made by Chantrey, at the request of an association formed for the purpose, and was first shown in November, 1827. It is now deposited at the State House, on certain conditions.





**ODEON.**



**TREMONT THEATRE.**



**ATHENAEUM.**



**WASHINGTON STATUE.**

*Drawn and Engraved for Bower's Picture of Boston.*







PINE STREET.



KING'S CHAPEL.



NEW BRICK.



CHAUNCY PLACE.

*Drawn and Engraved for Bowen's Picture of Boston.*

9. PINE-STREET CHURCH. No chronological order has been observed in these engravings, this church being the fortieth on the list. It was founded in 1837, and was given up a few years since, when the building was altered for business purposes. It stands on Washington street, corner of Pine.

10. KING'S CHAPEL. One of the best-preserved and best-known memorials of old Boston. The first building, built in 1688, was of wood; the present, of stone, was built in 1753.

11. NEW BRICK. This society was formed of seceders from the New North, in 1720. The Rev. William Waldron was its first minister. The Rev. Ebenezer Pemberton preached there from 1754 to 1775; at his death, 1779, the society united with the Second Church, or the Old North, the church of the Mathers, whose edifice had been destroyed by the British in 1775. Becoming Unitarian, the pastors were Henry Ware, Jr., Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Chandler Robbins. The house stood on Hanover, near Richmond street. In 1844 it was torn down, and a new building placed there, which was afterwards sold to the First Methodist Church, and later the building has been given up to business. The Second Church then settled in Freeman place, leading from Beacon street; in 1854 it united with the Church of Our Saviour, on Bedford street. This edifice was subsequently taken down and rebuilt on Boylston near Clarendon street.

12. CHAUNCY-PLACE CHURCH. This house belonged to the First Church in Boston, originally located on State street; then, from 1640 to 1808, on Washington street, where Joy's or Rogers' Building stands; then on Chauncy place, from 1808 to 1868. The old building is entirely destroyed. The present church is on the corner of Marlborough and Berkeley streets.

13. **HOLLIS-STREET CHURCH.** Founded by the Rev. Mather Byles in 1732; it was first built of wood, and burnt in 1787. The second building, of wood, was removed in 1810 to Weymouth. The church then rebuilt, of brick; it has had for pastors John Pierpont and Starr King. In 1882 the building was sold, the society built on the corner of Newbury and Exeter streets, and the old edifice has been altered into a theatre. In 1887 the parish united with the South Congregational Church, the two occupying the Newbury street building.

14. **CHRIST CHURCH,** on Salem street, near Copp's Hill, was built in 1723, for the Rev. Timothy Cutler. It still remains an Episcopal church, and preserves all the evidences of its antiquity.

15. **ST. PAUL'S CHURCH,** on Tremont street, between Winter street and Temple place, was built in 1820, and has suffered no exterior changes thus far.

16. **TRINITY CHURCH,** Summer street, was established as an Episcopal church in 1734, under the Rev. Addington Davenport. The old building was replaced, in 1828, by the one here represented, which last was destroyed in the great fire of 1872. Its representative is the noted building on Boylston street, or Copley square, under the charge of the Rev. Phillips Brooks.



HOLLIS STREET.



CHRIST CHURCH.



ST. PAUL'S CHURCH.



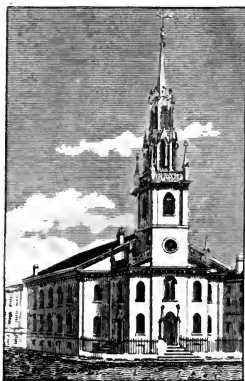
TRINITY CHURCH 1830.

*Drawn and Engraved for Bowens Picture of Boston.*

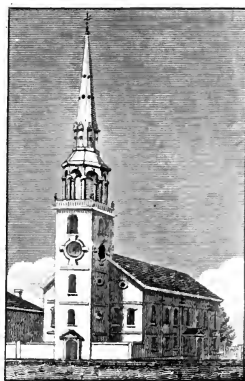




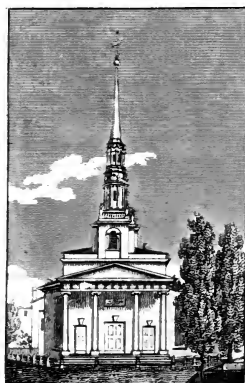




FEDERAL STREET CHURCH



OLD SOUTH.



NEW SOUTH.



PARK STREET.

*Drawn and Engraved for Bowen's Picture of Boston.*

17. **FEDERAL-STREET CHURCH** was built in 1730, for a number of Presbyterians, (Scotch-Irish,) under the Rev. John Moorhead. The engraving represents the third edifice, which was dedicated in 1809. In the building which preceded this sat the Convention which adopted the Constitution of the United States in 1788, a circumstance which gave its name to the street. The Unitarians held it under the Rev. William Ellery Channing and the Rev. Ezra Stiles Gannett. The society removed to Arlington street, and the old building was taken down some years ago.

18. **THE OLD SOUTH**, on the corner of Washington and Milk streets, remains as a landmark. The first house, of wood, stood from 1670 to 1730, when the present church was built. In 1874 the society removed to a new house, on the corner of Boylston and Dartmouth streets, but the old building has been preserved as a relic.

19. **THE NEW SOUTH** stood on Church Green, at the junction of Summer and Bedford streets, and was founded in 1717. In 1814 the church here shown was built. It has been removed, and the society is practically defunct.

20. **PARK-STREET CHURCH**, still a distinctive feature on the side of the Common, was built in 1809.

21. The FEDERAL-STREET BAPTIST CHURCH, established in 1827, sold its building in 1845, and built a church on Rowe, corner of Bedford street. The Rev. Baron Stow was long the pastor of this society, which now has a church on Clarendon near Tremont street.

22. The WEST CHURCH, on the corner of Cambridge and Lynde streets, bears witness to the time when that locality was the westerly end of the town. The first building stood from 1737 to 1806, when the present edifice replaced it. It has hardly changed since its erection, and Dr. Bartol, its pastor, was settled there in 1837.

23. The MASONIC TEMPLE was dedicated May 30, 1832. After about twenty-five years' occupancy, the Masons sold it to the United States Government for a Court-House. It has since been raised a story, remodelled, and fitted for business purposes.

24. MARINERS' CHURCH, Purchase street, was built in 1830. It was near the summit of Fort Hill, and well adapted to attract the class for which it was designed. The church was burnt about 1852, and the society then bought the building of the First Christian Church, on the corner of Summer and Sea (now Broad) streets, while the latter society built a new house on the corner of Tyler and Kneeland streets. The Mariners' Church united with Salem street Church in 1871; both are now extinct.



FEDERAL ST. BAPTIST.



WEST CHURCH.



MASONIC TEMPLE.



MARINERS' CHURCH.

*Drawn and Engraved for Bowen's Picture of Boston.*







BRATTLE STREET.



CATHOLIC.



BOWDOIN STREET.



CENTRAL UNIVERSAL.

*Drawn and Engraved for Bowen's Picture of Boston.*



25. BRATTLE-STREET CHURCH, established in 1699, like the other old churches has occupied several buildings. The first, of wood, was replaced in 1772 by the long-familiar church here shown. A few years ago the old house was sold and torn down, the society removed to the corner of Commonwealth avenue and Clarendon street, and subsequently dissolved, the First Baptist Society purchasing their building.

26. The CATHOLIC CHURCH, on Franklin street, called the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, was consecrated in 1803. The building stood long after business had invaded the street, but was sold some twenty years ago and gave place to stores.

27. BOWDOIN-STREET CHURCH was built in 1830 by a society formed under the Rev. Lyman Beecher, only five years before, and which had built and lost a house on Hanover street. After the long pastorates of Dr. Hubbard Winslow and Dr. Jared B. Waterbury, the church dwindled and dissolved. The house was bought by the parish of the Episcopal Church of the Advent, and subsequently passed into the hands of the "Mission Church of St. John the Evangelist," and remains without external changes.

28. The CENTRAL UNIVERSALIST CHURCH, corner of Bulfinch street and Bulfinch place, was formed in 1823. The Rev. Paul Dean was its first pastor.

29. THE NEW NORTH CHURCH, corner of Hanover street and Clark street, was established by the Rev. John Webb, in 1714. Andrew and John Eliot were successively settled here from 1742 to 1813. When Hanover street was widened, this building was set back and enlarged. It is now St. Stephen's Church (Catholic).

30. THE FIRST METHODIST CHURCH, built on North Bennett street in 1828. The society had previously worshipped on Hanover street. In 1849 it returned to that street, purchasing the edifice of the Second Unitarian Church (Dr. C. Robbins'), and sold this building to the Freewill Baptist Society, formerly located on Richmond street. Later it was bought by the Catholics, and is now called St. John the Baptist, and occupied by the Portuguese.

Nos. 31 and 32 not being situated in Boston, it may be thought unnecessary to trace their present condition. It is evident that the artist did not try to give a full list of all the churches in Boston, at the date of his book. Fortunately, in the "Boston Almanac" for 1843 and 1854, the task was acceptably performed, and in one or two later guide-books these cuts have been reproduced. A careful history of our churches is much to be desired, especially in view of the great changes made in the last ten years.



NEW NORTH.



FIRST METHODIST.

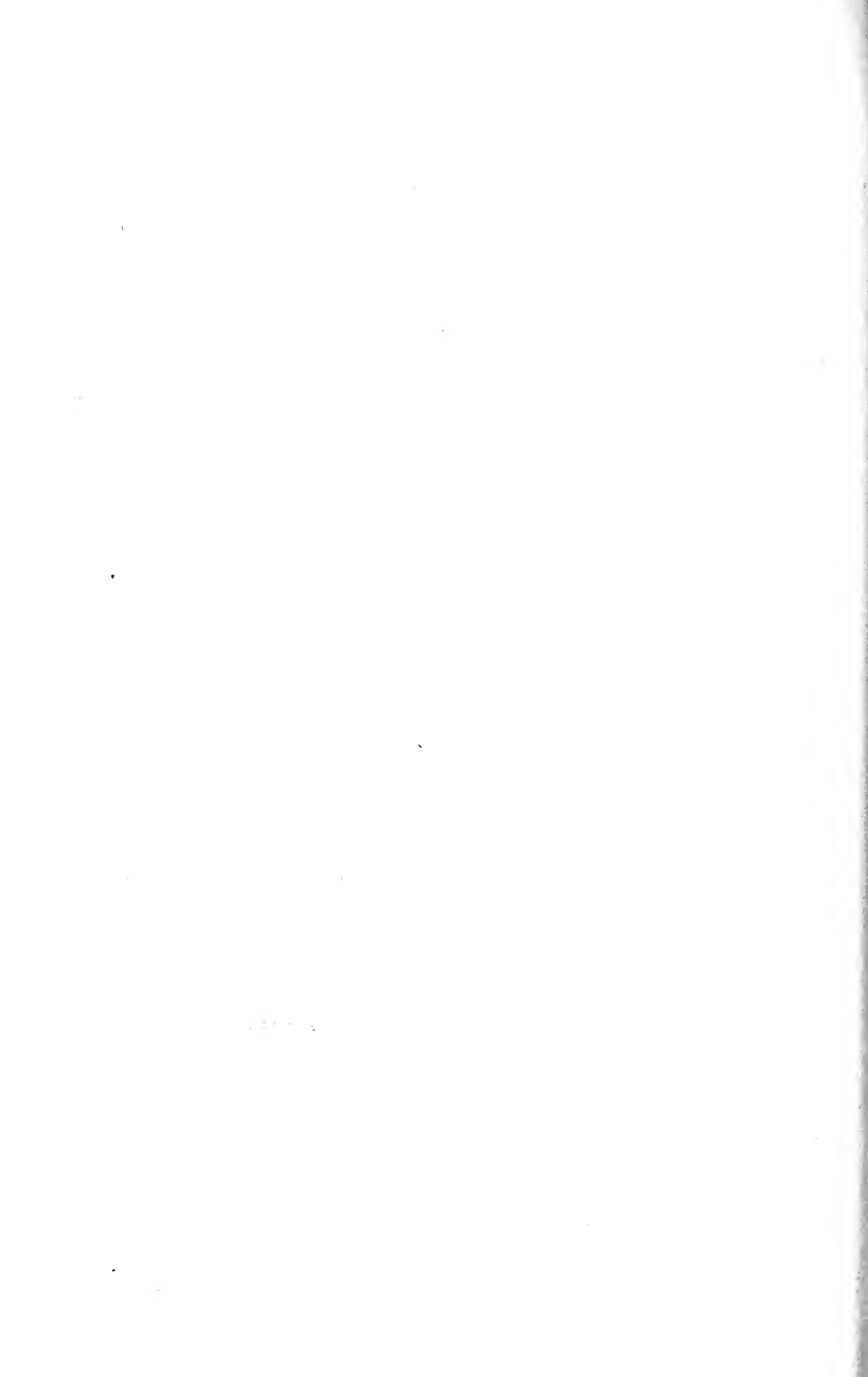


QUINCY TEMPLE.  
Quincy.



FIRST BAPTIST.  
Chelsea.

*Drawn and Engraved for Bowen's Picture of Boston.*





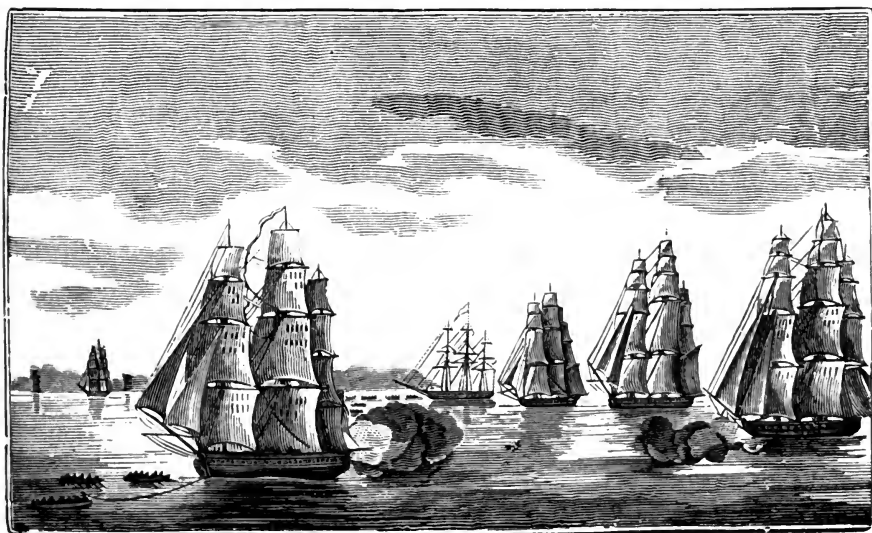
REDUCED FROM THE FRONTISPIECE TO "THE NAVAL MONUMENT."

[See page 37.]

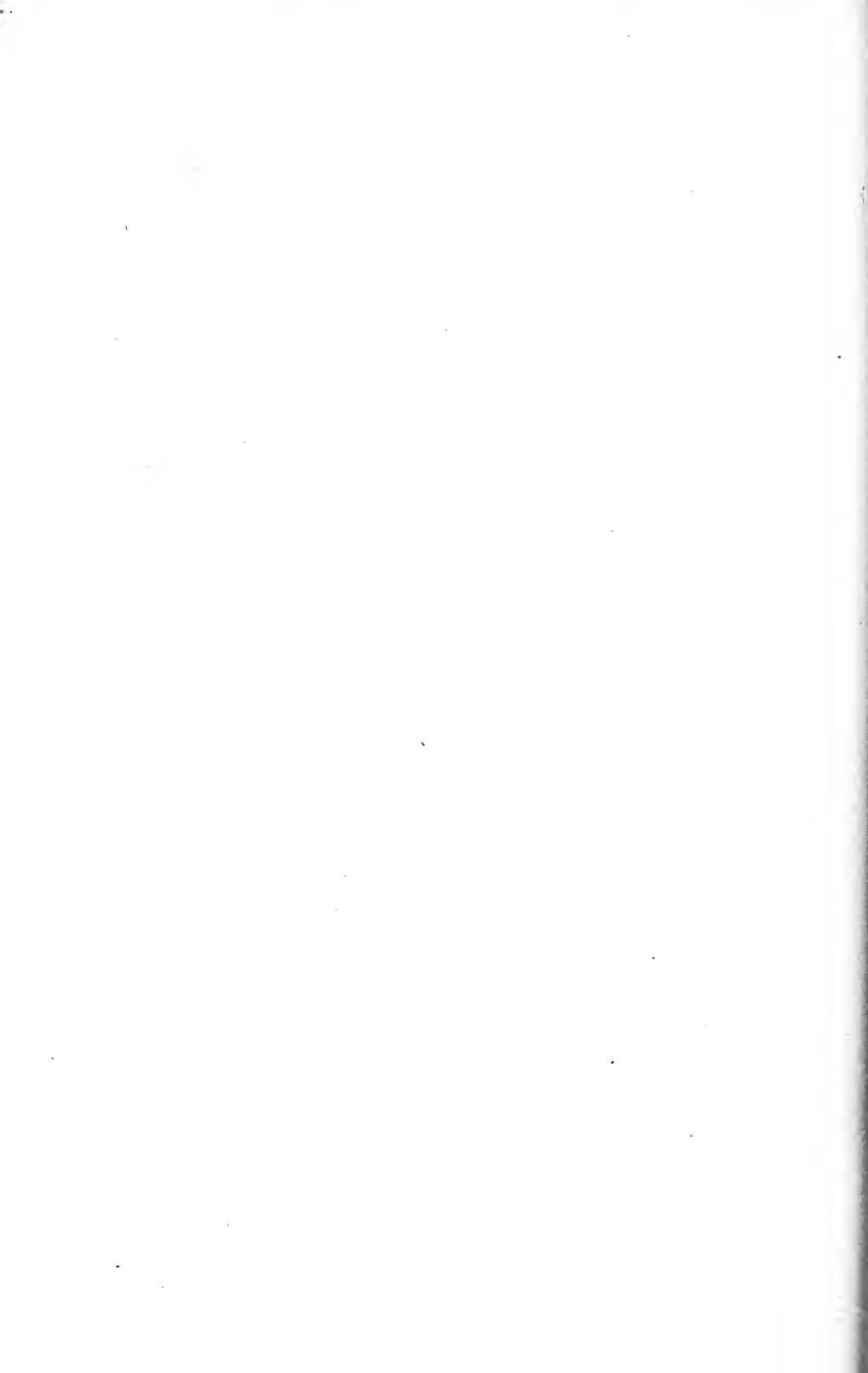




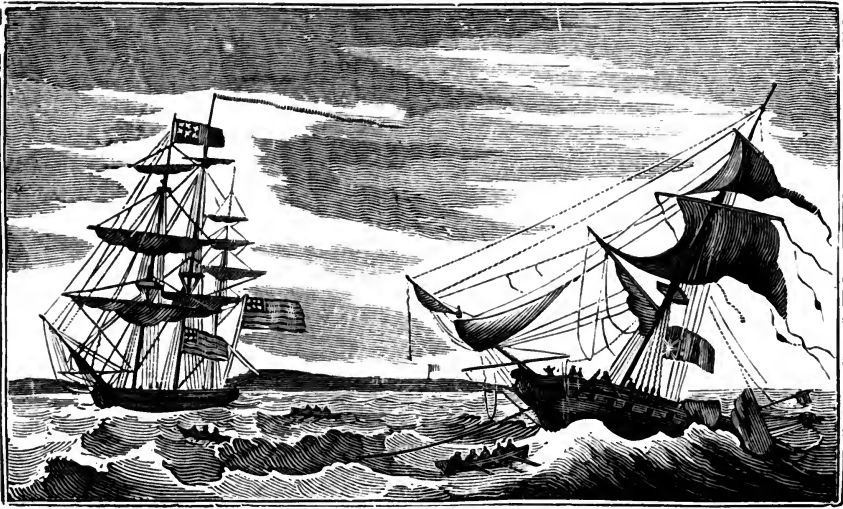
THE CONSTITUTION TAKING THE CYANE AND LEVANT.



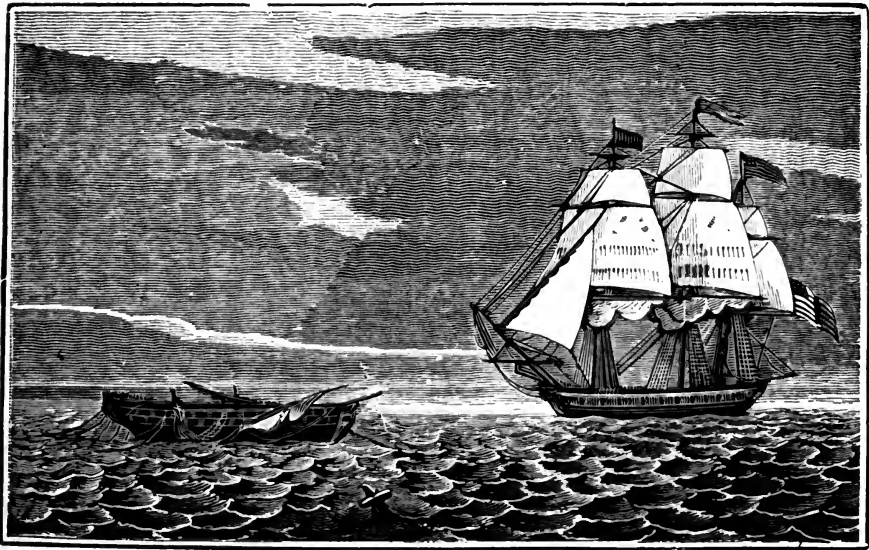
ESCAPE OF THE CONSTITUTION FROM THE BRITISH SQUADRON.



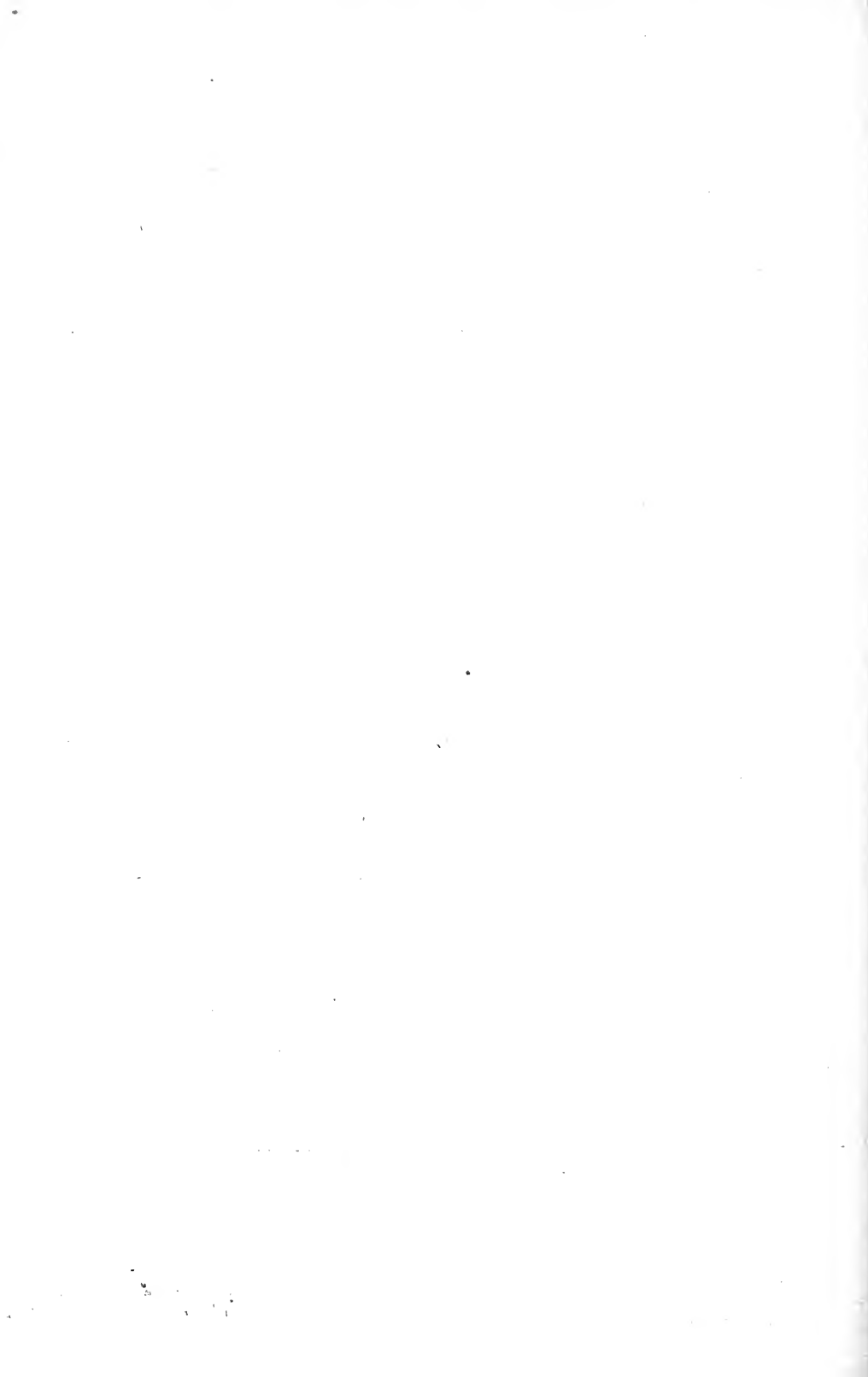


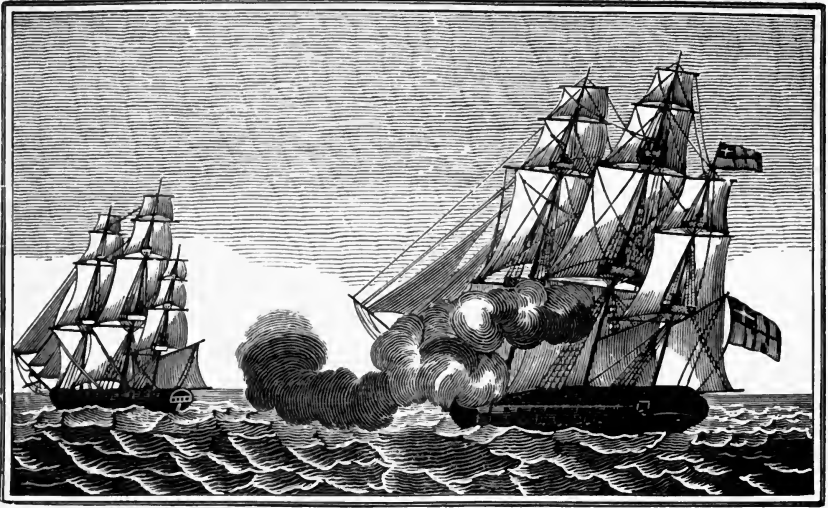


THE HORNET SINKING THE PEACOCK.



THE JAVA SURRENDERING TO THE CONSTITUTION.





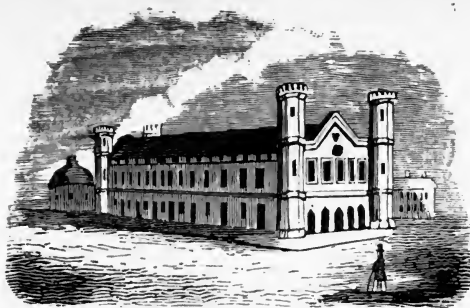
ESCAPE OF THE HORNET FROM A BRITISH SEVENTY-FOUR.

# COMMODORES

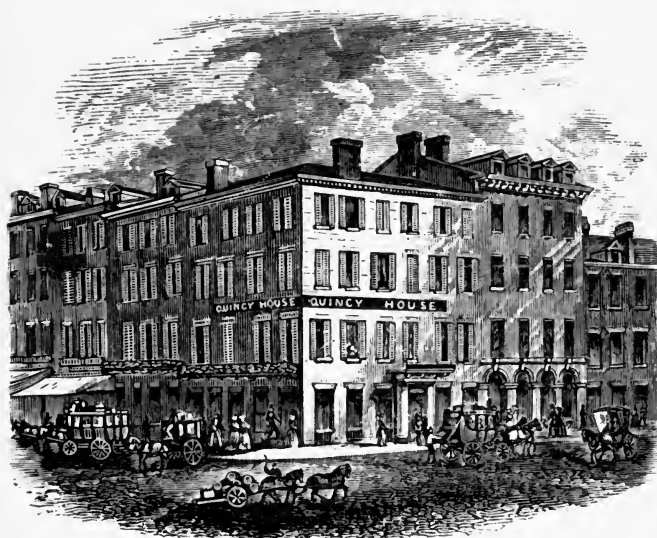


IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY

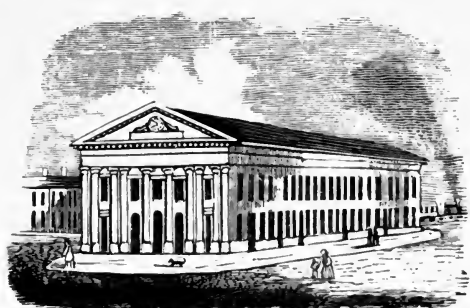




FITCHBURG RAILROAD DEPOT.

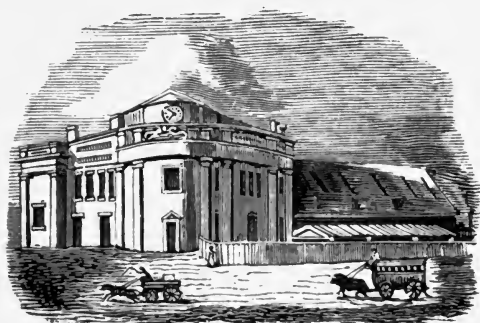
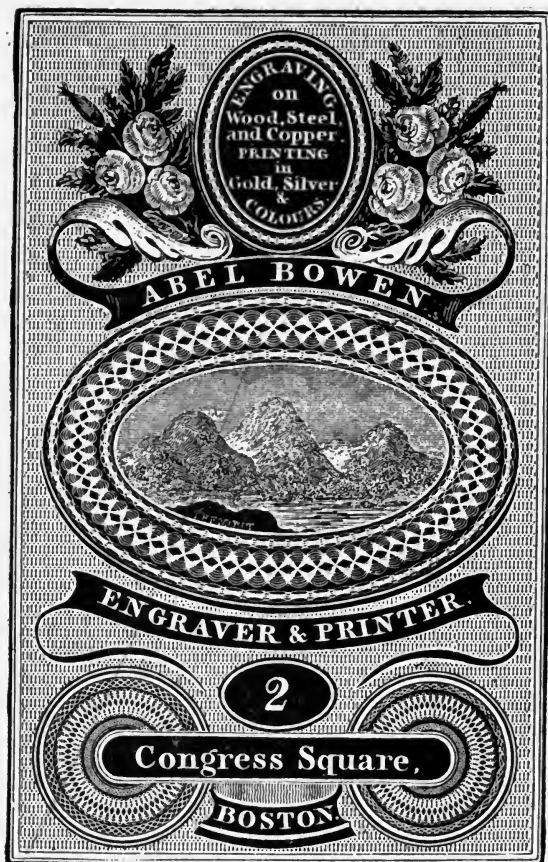


QUINCY HOUSE, BRATTLE STREET.



MAINE RAILROAD DEPOT.

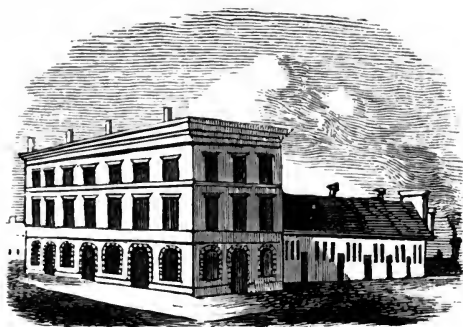




PROVIDENCE RAILROAD DEPOT.







OLD COLONY RAILROAD DEPOT.

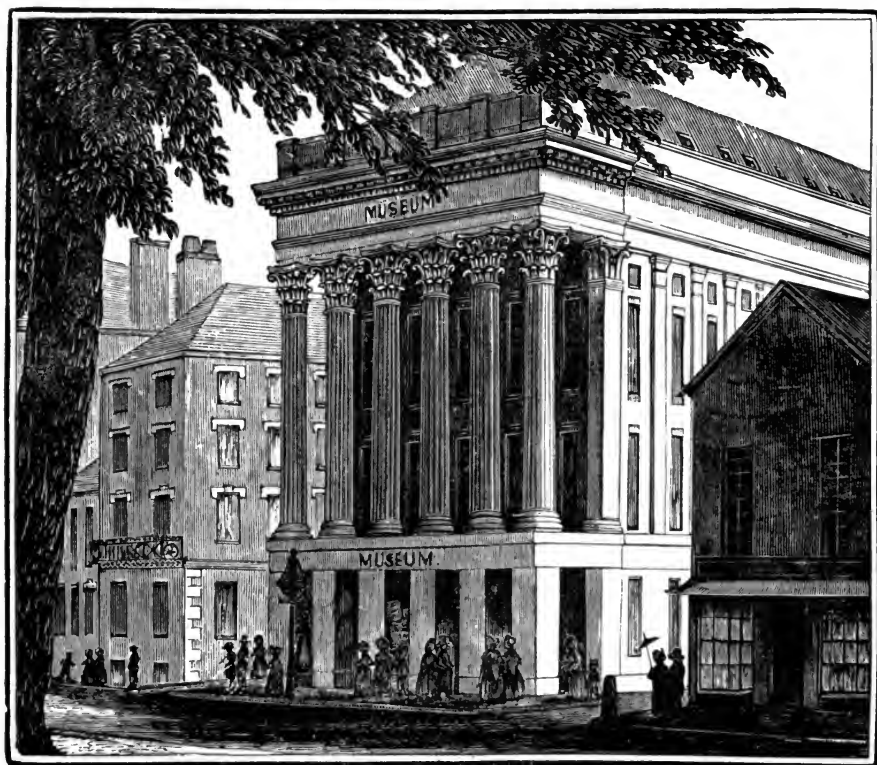


BOSTON MUSEUM (Interior).





WORCESTER RAILROAD DEPOT.



BOSTON MUSEUM (Exterior, with one of the Paddock Elms.)





OLD MARLBORO' HOTEL.

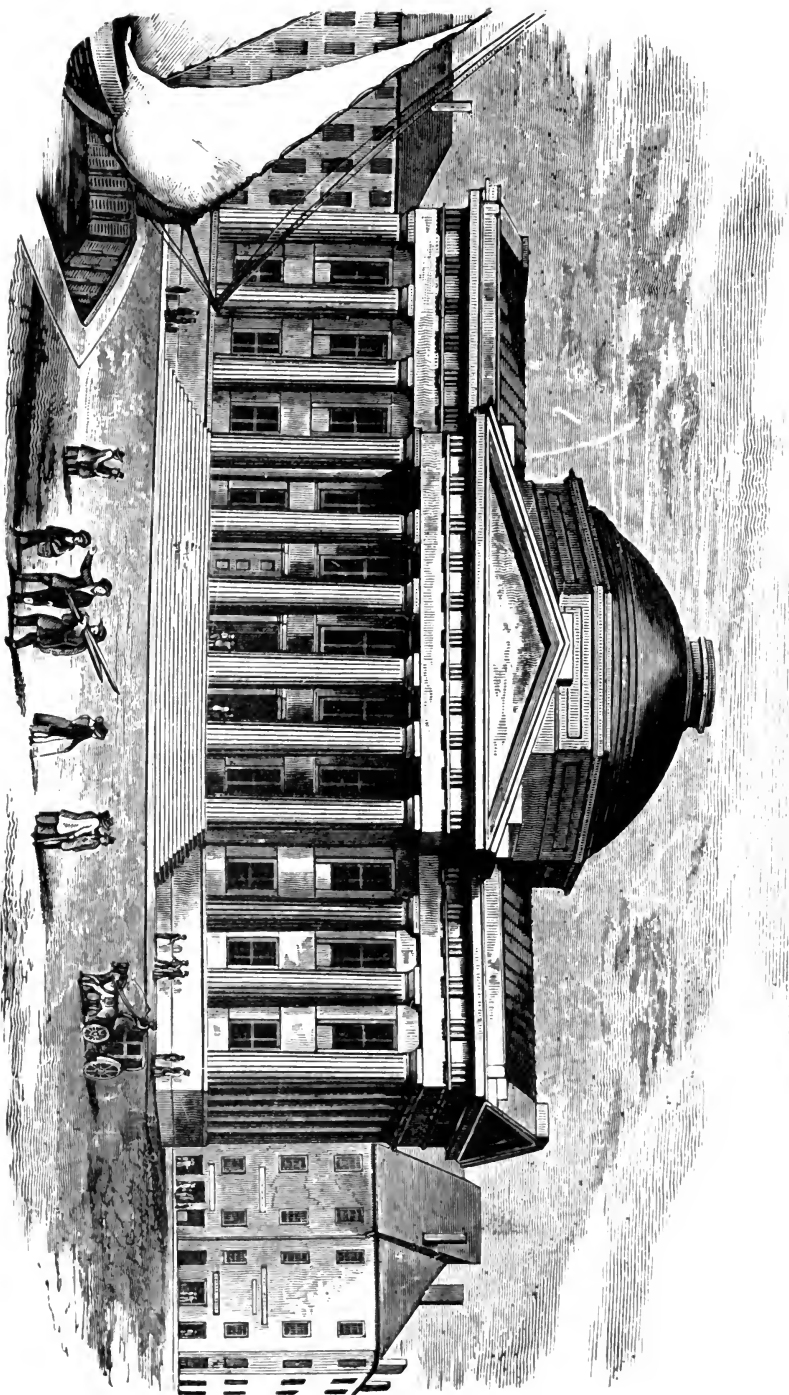


ADVERTISING CARD, IN THE BOSTON DIRECTORY, 1820.



EASTERN RAILROAD DEPOT.

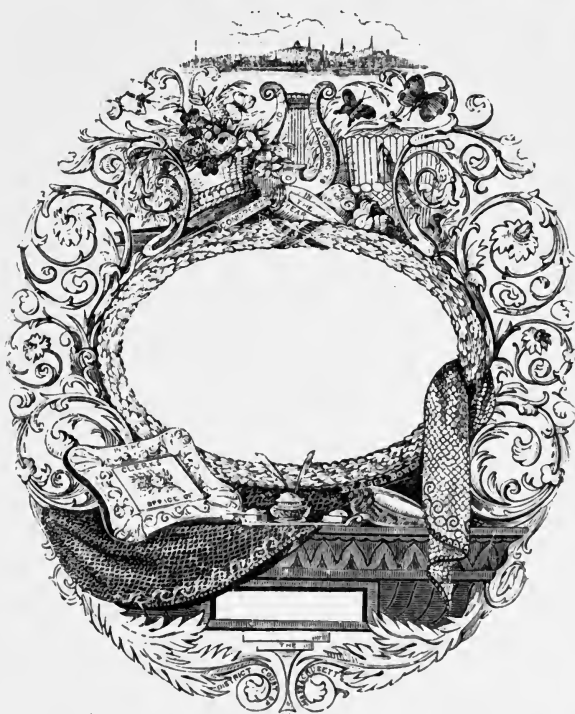
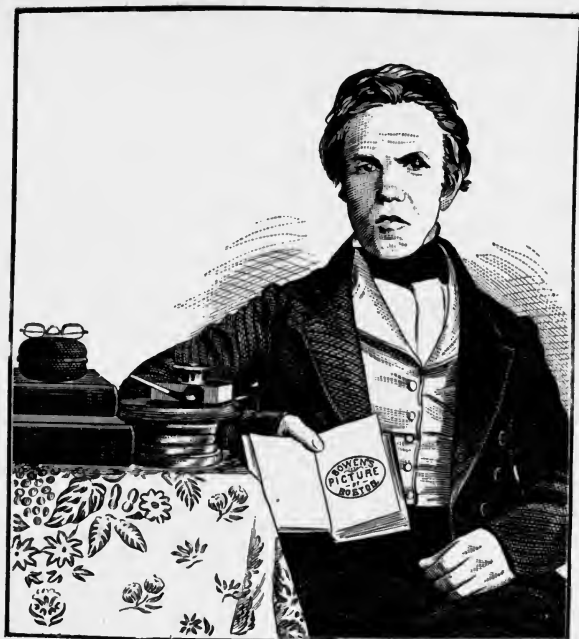




BOSTON CUSTOM HOUSE. (Original Eastern Front.)







Impressions of the above cut will be found in some copies of The Young Lady's Book, printed in 1830. Subsequently Bowen engraved color blocks for this cut, which was perhaps the earliest use of wood cuts for color printing in Boston, impressions from which form the title for "Bowen's Picture of Boston."





DR. FAUSTUS.



FROM THE YOUNG LADY'S BOOK, 1830.



# CHANGES OF VALUES IN REAL ESTATE

IN BOSTON

THE PAST ONE HUNDRED YEARS

BY

ALEXANDER S. PORTER.

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A PAPER READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY, APRIL 13, 1886.



**The Bostonian Society**

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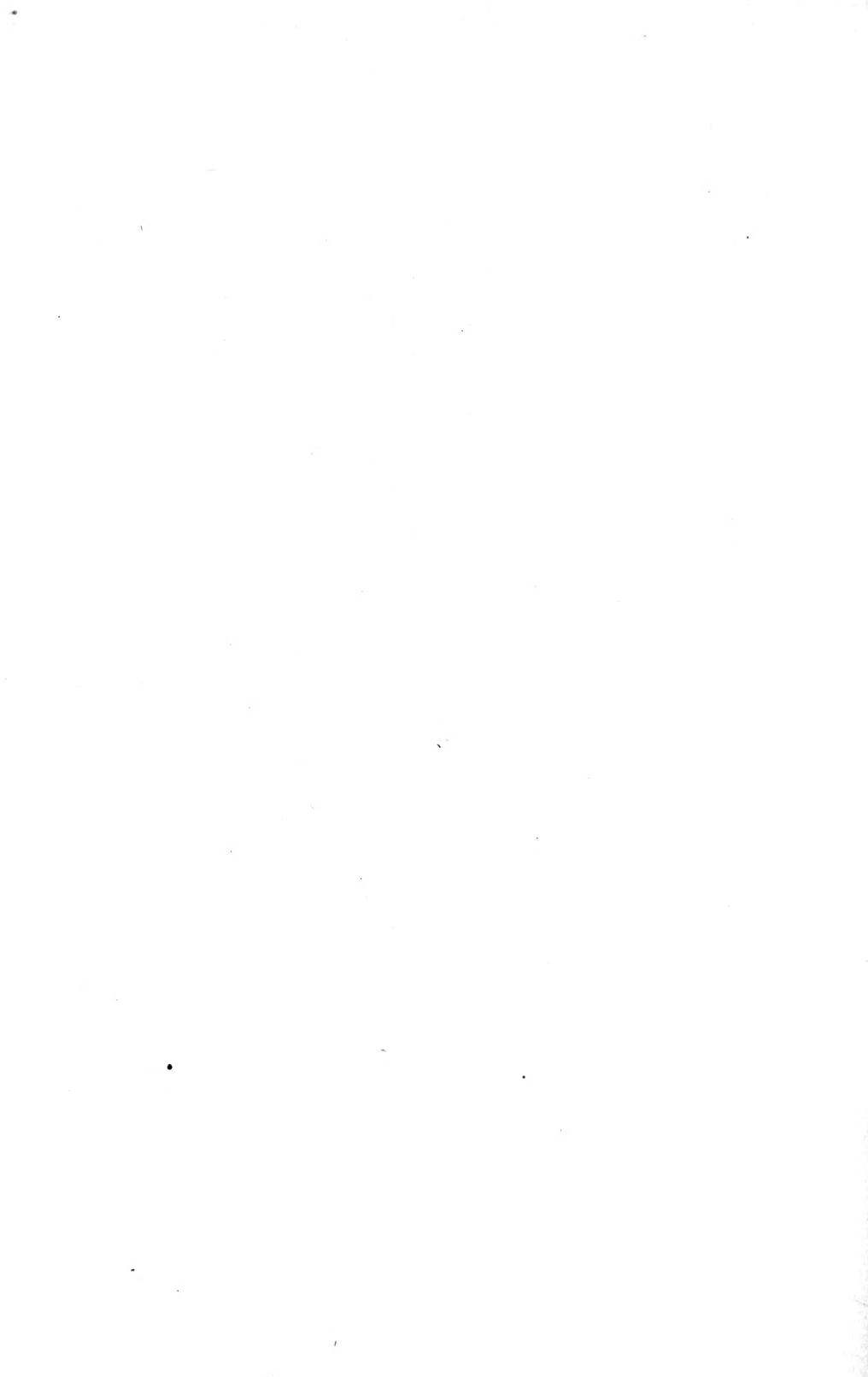
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COLLECTIONS  
OF THE  
BOSTONIAN SOCIETY

VOL. I. No. 3

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CHANGES OF VALUES  
IN REAL ESTATE IN BOSTON  
THE PAST ONE HUNDRED YEARS

READ BY

ALEXANDER S. PORTER

APRIL 13, 1886



BOSTON  
OLD STATE HOUSE  
1888





# CHANGES OF VALUES IN REAL ESTATE IN BOSTON

THE PAST ONE HUNDRED YEARS.

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WHEN I was informed a few weeks ago that I was to have the privilege of addressing the Bostonian Society on the change of values of real estate since the war of the Revolution, it was with feelings of satisfaction that I set about the task of gathering such information as seemed most fitting to emphasize these changes. But on looking into the records and attempting to study the history of the various properties that I had selected as examples of the wonderful rise in values that has taken place, I was overwhelmed with the gigantic nature of the task; for at every step and every turn I found our records full to overflowing with accounts of the most intense historical interest, and became really at a loss where or how to begin.

It seemed to me that every stick and stone in the old quarter of the town was closely identified with the early struggles of our ancestors, and that every house had a history of its own; so that in starting to follow up any particular point, I found myself delving deeper and deeper into the history of the lives of the people who were identified with it. I became as it were absorbed in reveries of the past and

oblivious of the busy present. I have found myself within the sacred portals of the First Church that stood just here across State Street, where Brazer's building now is, and listened to those zealous Puritans, Wilson, Cotton, Winthrop and Bellingham. I have been with their followers to the "*Old Brick*," and heard the sweet tinkle of the nine o'clock bell, which was placed in the little belfry in 1649. I have visited the stately mansions of Hancock and Bromfield, Bowdoin and Phillips. I have sauntered over the old North End, and witnessed the sacking of the fated house of Governor Hutchinson on the night of the 26th of August, 1765. I have dined with convivial patriots at the Royal Exchange, Bite Tavern, and the *Bunch of Grapes*, and have listened to the magnetic eloquence of Otis and Adams and Quincy in these historic halls.

I have said my catechism to the pious and eccentric Mather Byles, and have come out of the old Latin school house crushed and dejected under the rigid discipline and arithmetical conundrums of the relentless Master Lovell. But at last I have awakened from my reveries to find myself still uncertain as to where to begin.

It would be impossible in half an hour's time to justly treat so broad a subject, and I can therefore give you but a slight idea of the marvellous changes that have taken place since 1800, when Boston was a village, and of the causes that have intervened, which have brought it to its present prominent place among the cities of the world.

When peace was declared in 1782, the inhabitants of Boston found themselves in the most deplorable condition. The population, which before the war numbered some 20,000 persons, fell off during the siege to one-third of that number, and at the close of the war the population had only increased to 12,000. Commerce and trade of all kinds had received a terrible blow, and all looked gloomy and uncertain. But the brave men who had fought the great fight were not to be discouraged, and immediately began, with that same pluck and energy that had won in the great struggle for indepen-

dence, to put forth new energies to redeem their losses, and to put their houses to rights.

The process was of necessity a slow one, and it was not till the advent of the new century that prosperity dawned again and a new life and a new spirit were made manifest.

To properly understand the great changes that have taken place, let us for a moment look back to the Boston of eighty-five years ago.

The map of this period will show us a small bluff peninsula — indeed, almost an island. There were, of course, Copp's Hill, Fort Hill, and Beacon Hill, towering up in their ancient glory, while at various intervening points the tide-water flowed up into the very middle of the town. The shores of the peninsula were deeply indented, and numerous large coves were thus formed, all of which have since been filled up and built upon, and now form important sections of a great and growing city.

The most easterly of the coves mentioned, enclosed by the headlands of Copp's and Fort Hill, became the Town Cove and dock. To the South, was the South Cove, embraced between the point of land near the foot of South Street, formerly called Windmill Point, and the South Boston bridge. The third inlet was called the Millpond, lying between the two points from which now extend bridges to Charlestown and East Cambridge.

The Town Dock was partly filled in 1780, and several acres of valuable land were thus acquired, the original area of the town being about seven hundred acres. This was the Boston of 1800. There was no "South End," no "Back Bay." Only fancy what Boston must have been without those two opposite features! No "Union Park," no "Chester Square," no north side of Commonwealth Avenue, no water side of Beacon Street. But, although society in those days was not divided by a railway, there were Beacon Hill and Fort Hill to divide the social honors.

The population of Boston then numbered about 20,000 persons. Business began to revive, and there were evidences

of prosperity on every hand. By 1810 the population had increased to 34,000. In 1820 to 43,000. In 1830 to 61,000. In 1840 to 93,000. In 1850 to 137,000. In 1860 to 177,840. In 1880 to 362,839, with outlying wards acquired by annexation.

Real estate has steadily risen in value along with the increase in population, as I will presently show you by a carefully prepared schedule. By 1830 the population had increased so much that it was felt that the time had come when more room was needed, and soon afterwards the first grand real estate enterprise was inaugurated by the filling up of the South Cove. The company was chartered Jan. 31st, 1833, and \$415,000 was subscribed. The work was begun May 3d, 1834, under the management of Mr. Francis Jackson, and finished in November, 1837. Seventy-seven acres of good land were thus added. This land was laid out into streets and building operations were at once begun. The Worcester and Western Railroad had just been finished, and of this land it acquired seven and three-fourths acres. The seventy acres of flats acquired by the South Cove Corporation cost on the average only 12½ cents per square foot.

By this time, or after the panic of 1837, the merchants had outgrown their business quarters, and during the next ten years there was great activity. Whole blocks of stores and warehouses, mostly built of granite, sprung up in every direction, and although many that are left seem now dilapidated and old-fashioned, yet many wise men shook their heads when they were originally built, and predicted wreck and ruin to those who had been so adventurous as to put up such palatial structures.

In 1845 the Cruft Block on Pearl Street was built. This comprised four four-story granite stores. The whole area had been previously occupied by Mr. Cruft as a residence.

The Quincy and Brooks blocks on Pearl Street were built in 1847, each comprising four four-story granite stores.

Milk Street Block, Bowdoin Block, Sewall Block, Morton Block, Lawrence Block and Old South Block, a block on the corner of Milk and Hawley and another at the corner of Milk

and Atkinson (now Congress) Streets, comprising in all twenty-four stores, were all built in 1845 and 1846.

Two large granite blocks on Federal Street were built by Abbot Lawrence in 1844-1845. Sanford Block on Federal Street, consisting of six stores, was built by Samuel Sanford in 1846. A large granite block was built on Congress Street by Thomas Wigglesworth in 1845. The building at the corner of Washington Street and Spring Lane was erected in 1845 by Ozias Goodwin.

A large block was built in 1845 on the corner of Washington and Boylston Streets by David Mosely, and the granite building on the corner of Washington and School Streets, now occupied by Richard Briggs, was built by David Greenough in 1843. The building known as Amory Hall, on the corner of West and Washington Streets, was built in 1835, while the building next to it, cornering on Temple Place, was erected the year before.

In 1835, twenty-eight brick stores were built on Tremont Street — opposite the Museum — between Beacon Street and Scollay Square. Temple Place was completed in 1844, and consisted of twenty-two fine houses. The first house, No. 1, was built by the Hon. James Savage.

The granite block on the corner of Washington and Winter Streets was built in 1846. Indeed, from State to Boylston Streets, Washington Street was the scene of great activity. Yet this activity was not confined to this section alone, for while all this work was going on, Fulton, Ferry, North, Union, Hanover, Ann, John, Barret, Court and Sudbury Streets were all alive with busy mechanics, and beautiful buildings were going up on every hand. It seemed as if Boston had worn out all its old clothes by 1840, and was determined to replenish its entire wardrobe.

The following facts and figures will show the changes in value in Boston since 1800 — taking the assessors' estimates as a basis, and giving these values at intervals of twenty years. It has not been possible, however, to ascertain in every instance the estimates of 1800 and 1820.

To begin with, let us take the well-known Concert Hall Estate, at the corner of Court and Hanover Streets. A large part of the estate was taken off by the widening of Hanover Street, but proper deductions have been made from the figures given. For 2525 square feet, the assessment in 1800 was \$6,000; in 1820 it was \$21,000; by 1840 it had still further advanced to \$36,000; in 1860 to \$75,000; and in 1880 the assessors marked it up once more to \$108,000, or eighteen times its value in 1800.

Concert Hall was owned by the family of Deblois until 1769. Before the Revolution it was a resort of the "Friends of Liberty." The American prisoners captured at Bunker Hill are said to have been tried here by a military court.

Concerts were held here as early as 1755, and it was here, too, that Governor Hancock gave in 1778 his famous ball to the officers of D'Estaing's fleet. The Massachusetts Charitable Mechanics' Association had their first meetings in Concert Hall. It was kept as a tavern in 1792 by James Vila, but in later days it passed into the hands of Peter B. Brigham, who had charge of it for forty years.

In 1800, we find the value placed on the estate No. 23 Court Street, belonging to Charles Francis Adams, at \$12,000; 1840, \$19,000; in 1860 it had reached \$50,000, while in 1880 the land alone was assessed at \$118,000, or just fifteen times as much as in 1800.

The Sears Building covers 11,000 square feet. The property was assessed in 1820 at only \$24,200; In 1840 it was marked at \$169,000; 1860 at \$258,000, while in 1880 the land alone was assessed at \$490,000. Thus it will be observed that the value changed from a little over \$2 per foot in 1820 to \$44½ per foot in 1880.

This estate, formerly the property of Peter C. Brooks, was sold at auction March 15th, 1868, at \$32 per foot, or \$353,000. There is a memory that lingers around this spot which still remains dear to many a brother of the legal fraternity. The portion of the old building having its entrance at No. 4 Court Street, was occupied in times gone by, by many distinguished



members of the bar. In 1837 here were found Rufus Choate and F. W. Crowninshield (partners,) Chas. Sumner and Geo. S. Hillard (partners,) Theophilus Parsons and Wm. G. Stevens, Horace Mann, Edward G. Loring, Benjamin Guild, Luther S. Cushing, John O. Sargent, P. W. Chandler, John Codman, T. P. Chandler, John A. Andrew and others. When Mr. George S. Hillard left the building in 1856 he bade farewell to Number Four, in these graceful lines :

The child that in the cradle slept,  
When first upon the stairs I stepped,  
Now strongly stalks across the land,  
With beard on chin and vote in hand.

And I have passed from Summer's prime  
To Autumn's sober shadowy time,  
And felt the throbs and known the strife,  
That slowly rear the dome of life.

I hear no more the well-known feet,  
The kindly looks no more I greet;  
But, ere I part from Number Four,  
I leave my blessing at the door.

#### WASHINGTON STREET.

The estate at the corner of Washington Street and Temple Place, known as the Charles Blake estate, comprising 8650 square feet, was assessed in 1840 at \$48,000; in 1860 at \$90,000; in 1880 the valuation was placed at \$360,000, while in 1885 it had increased to \$425,600. This estate is now rented for \$35,000 and taxes. An offer of \$450,000 was refused in 1884.

The prominent estate known as the Richard Briggs corner, at the junction of Washington and School Streets, was assessed in 1800 at \$10,400; 1820, \$38,800; 1840, \$58,000; 1860, \$96,000; but in 1880 the value had climbed to \$190,000, or nineteen times the value in 1800.

The Old Corner Bookstore on the other corner, containing 3800 feet, was assessed in 1800 for \$7,000; in 1840 at \$40,000,

in 1860 at \$75,000, while in 1880 the valuation had reached \$140,000, just twenty times the value of 1800.

The Joseph T. Brown apothecary store on the corner of Washington and Bedford Streets, was assessed in 1840 at \$7,000; 1860, \$32,500; in 1880, land alone at \$53,000.

Tuttle's shoe store and adjoining estates on Washington corner of Winter Streets, 7,500 ft.; 1800, \$2,400; 1820, \$7,800; 1840, \$22,600; 1860, \$96,000; 1880, \$350,000; 1885, \$436,000. (Land alone \$350,000.) A most remarkable advance.

Joy's Building, now known as Rogers' Building, comprising 5,200 square feet, was assessed in 1820 at \$42,000; in 1840 at \$75,000; in 1860 at \$160,000; 1880 at \$262,000. As the site of the Old Brick meeting house, this estate is one of the most memorable in our early history. If I had sufficient time I would give you an account of the building of the Old Brick, and of the removal from the old church where Brazer's Building stands. But, while I shall not be able to do this, I cannot pass over this estate without reminding you of one interesting fact. The Old Brick stood for ninety-five years, till the year 1808, when it was deemed advisable to build a new edifice.

The proprietors, owning an estate on Summer Street, empowered two of the deacons to contract for the building of a new house, and on the 22d of September, 1808, they,—David Tilden and James Morrill,—made a contract with Benjamin Joy to erect a meeting house and four dwelling houses on Summer Street and Chauncy Place, in payment for which the deacons were to convey to the said Joy the estate on Cornhill, now Washington Street, known as the Old Brick. Mr. Joy immediately went forward with the work, and when the church in Chauncy Place and the four houses were completed, the conveyance was made, February 22d, 1809. The property remained in the Joy family till April 6th, 1870, on which date it was sold to Charles O. Rogers for \$280,000.

Meantime Chauncy Street, and indeed all the neighboring streets, had been converted to business uses, and the First Church was forced once more to seek a more eligible site.

The proprietors bought a lot on Marlborough Street and the present beautiful church was erected. The old church in Chauncy Street then coming into the market for sale, was purchased by Mr. Joy, the grandson of the same Mr. Benj. Joy who had built it in 1808. The fine granite warehouses now standing on the site of the old Chauncy Street Church were built soon afterwards by Mr. Joy, who owned them till 1881, when they were sold to Mr. Moses Williams.

The Nath'l Curtis Estate, on the northeast corner of Washington and Dover Streets, has been in the Curtis family for at least one hundred and fifty years. It comprises about 24,000 feet. It was assessed in 1800 at \$7,000; in 1820 the value was marked down to \$6,200; in 1840 it was put up to \$15,600; in 1860 to \$40,000, and in 1880 it had reached \$124,000, nearly eighteen times its value in 1800.

Washington Street, corner Summer, occupied by Shreve, Crump and Low; 1820, \$10,200; 1840, \$37,000; 1860, \$155,000; 1880, land alone, \$268,000 — 6,740 feet, \$40 per foot.

All are familiar with the Deacon Estate, Boston Neck, and no doubt remember how long it was completely shut up, and shut out from public view. It comprised 24,600 square feet, and in 1850 it was assessed at \$60,000; in 1860 at \$75,000; and in 1870 at \$98,400. It was sold in 1870, after the death of Mr. Peter Parker, for \$125,000 for the land alone. The building which originally cost upwards of \$60,000, was sold at auction for \$6,000, and was purchased by the person who had bought the land. The Child Estate, corner of Washington and Hollis Streets, was assessed in 1840 at \$9,000; 1860, \$20,000; 1880, \$45,600. No. 1 Temple Place, the Hon. James Savage's estate, 1840, \$15,000; 1860, \$17,000; 1880, \$54,000; (worth now \$100,000.)

The Tudor House, Beacon Street, corner Joy, covering three lots on Beacon Street, and four on Joy Street, sold in April, 1791, for \$2,665; 1832, \$98,000; in 1885, the Tudor House covering two lots, \$102,000. No. 58 Beacon Street, formerly the residence of Mr. William Minot, was assessed in 1820 for \$9,000, in 1840 at \$19,000, 1860, \$30,000, and in 1880

at \$44,000; about five times the value in 1820. The David Sears Mansion House on Beacon Street, now the Somerset Club, assessed in 1800 at \$16,000; in 1820, (when the present building was in process of construction,) land assessed at \$20,000; 1840, with the building, \$48,000; 1860 the value had risen to \$110,000, and in 1880, to \$172,500. It was purchased by the Somerset Club for \$210,000.

The Warren Estate, No. 2 Park Street, 1820, \$15,000; 1840, \$24,000; 1860, \$28,000; 1880, \$65,000. The Union Club House, on Park Street, which was bought in 1840 by Abbot Lawrence, was valued in 1840 at \$45,000, in 1880 at \$77,000. The Ticknor House, corner of Park and Beacon Streets, in 1830, \$30,000; 1860, \$45,000; 1880, \$70,000.

The Puritan Club House, Mt. Vernon, corner of Joy Street, the mansion of the late Joseph Iasigi, 1840, \$24,000; 1860, \$33,000; 1880, \$37,000.

#### TREMONT STREET.

Tremont Street, corner Temple Place, the old Masonic Temple; 1840, \$34,000; 1880, \$180,000 for land alone. It was sold in 1885 for \$255,000. Tremont, corner West Street, F. H. Bradlee estate; 1840, \$21,000; 1880, \$107,000. The Tremont House, 29,000 feet; 1840, \$190,000; 1860, \$200,000; 1880, \$400,000, including Tremont Place additions made to the property. Tremont Street, corner Pemberton Square, (long occupied by Rogers' Shoe Store); 1840, \$35,000; 1880, \$130,000. Tremont Street, opposite Park Street Church, the granite block and Hamilton Place, formerly Phillips Garden, owned by Wm. Phillips; 1800, \$20,000; 1820, \$46,000; 1840, \$127,000; 1860, \$175,200; 1880, \$521,000. This does not include the north corner of Hamilton Place, for which the Phillips family paid \$190,000. On Sept. 14th, 1795, the estate 163, 165, 167, 169, etc., Tremont Street, was sold by the city at auction. It was 70 feet front by about 100 feet, running through to Mason Street, and containing about 17,000 square feet. The consideration cited in the deed is £1,940 of

late lawful money, \$6,466.66, or about 33 cents per foot. It is now assessed at \$22. per foot.

It is just about fifty years ago that the Gardner Green estate, now known as Pemberton Square, came into the market, for the erection of elegant dwelling houses on the hillside and for stores on the Tremont Street frontage. It was the most princely place in Boston previous to that time. The grounds were laid out in terraces, and there were pleasant walks, summer houses and rare plants. It was last opened to the public on the occasion of General Jackson's memorable visit during the second term of his Presidency. It was really a magnificent old place, and was made historical in Cooper's novel of *Lionel Lincoln*.

Estate No. 7 Pemberton Square, formerly the residence of John A. Lowell, was assessed in 1840 at \$32,000, and in 1880 at \$46,500, which was far below its value. The C. F. Adams estate, Tremont Street, corner of Boylston, was purchased in 1806 by J. Q. Adams of John Lowell for \$21,000. In 1820 it was taxed for \$12,600; 1840, \$14,000; 1860, \$70,000. In 1880 the land alone, \$134,000.

#### STATE STREET.

The estate No. 40 State Street, known as the Union Building, covering 11,000 feet; in 1800, \$30,000; 1820, \$62,000; 1840, \$151,000; 1860, \$320,000; 1880, \$430,000; (building \$100,000 and land \$330,000.) No. 66 State Street, formerly the Massachusetts Bank, containing 5,451 feet; 1800, \$30,000; 1820, \$52,000; 1840, \$75,000; 1860, \$130,000; 1880, \$195,000. The marble Building, corner Devonshire, occupied now by First National Bank and others, 1800, \$12,000; 1820, \$24,800; 1840, \$42,000; 1860, \$90,000; 1880, land alone, \$302,000, or twenty-five times as much as in 1800. The City Bank, State Street, next to the corner of Kilby Street, 1840, \$60,000; 1860, \$86,000; 1880, \$129,000. It was sold February 6, 1886, for \$200,000; (building assessed \$25,000.) Brazer's Building, No. 27 State Street, covering 2,600 feet, 1820, \$22,000; 1860, \$125,000; 1880, \$175,000. The Old State House,

covering 4,571 feet, 1820, \$28,600; 1880, \$235,000. No. 120 State Street, 1820, \$5,600; 1880, \$22,000. The Merchants' Exchange, 16,900 feet, 1840, \$115,000; 1860, \$360,000; 1880, \$488,000, (the building \$150,000,) land \$388,000. The New England Bank Building at the corner of State and Kilby Streets, was valued in 1820 at about \$30,000. It has just been sold to the Washington Insurance Co. for \$250,000. On this site stood the famous old tavern known as the Bunch of Grapes, and few inns of that day had a more illustrious patronage. In 1712 it was kept by Francis Holmes, afterwards by Wm. Coffin, Joshua Barker and Col. Joseph Ingersoll, and at last by James Vila in 1789, who removed the same year to Concert Hall. It was here that in 1728 Gov. Burnett was received on his arrival in Boston. In 1776, after the reading of the Declaration of Independence, the Lion and Unicorn from the Town House, Court House, Custom House, and all other British emblems that could be found, were made into a bonfire in front of the Bunch of Grapes. Gen'l Lafayette was entertained here in 1784, and without doubt enjoyed a glass of punch, for which the house was specially noted.

In the year 1650 this estate belonged to one Lane, who sold it to one Leverett in 1656. It passed through several hands after this, and in 1774 was purchased by John Erving, who sold it to Gov. James Bowdoin in 1788. The Governor dying in 1790, it passed to his wife and to his son James. At the death of James the estate was sold to the New England Bank, by his executors, T. L. Winthrop and Richard Sullivan.

The city has always placed a valuation on its public buildings, and the old Cradle of Liberty in 1820 was valued at \$7,200, but had risen in 1880 to \$250,000. T Wharf, called on the assessors' book Brimmer T; in 1800, \$10,000; 1820, \$43,600; 1840, \$200,000; 1860, \$314,500; 1880, \$291,500. Long Wharf, 1800, \$60,000; 1820, \$90,000; 1840, \$325,000; 1860, \$507,000; 1880, \$486,600.

Niles's Stable, School Street, 15,220 feet, 1840, \$40,000; 1860, with new building, \$115,000; 1880, \$350,000. The property on the corner of Rowe and Essex Streets now

Chauncy and Essex, was sold, Jan. 15th, 1806, by John Rowe to John W. Bradlee, 3,200 feet, for \$3,200. The land is now assessed at \$15.50 per foot. (Sold January 1st, 1853, \$13,200.)

The mansion occupied by Montgomery Sears, Esq., corner of Commonwealth Avenue and Arlington Street, 1860, \$4 per foot; 1880, \$9.50; 1885, \$13. This property, it will be remembered, can not date back beyond 1856; previous to that time it was occupied by tide water. No. 13 Louisburg Square, 1840, \$12,000; 1860, 18,000; 1880, 14,500; No. 99 Sudbury Street, corner of Court, was assessed in 1840 at \$7,000; 1880, the land alone, \$45,000. No. 133 Summer Street, corner of South, stood in 1840, \$8,000; but in 1880 the land alone was marked at \$58,000.

The estate at the junction of Merrimac and Friend Streets, sold July, 1843, 3,000 feet, \$5,935; August, 1854, \$18,000; September, 1868, 32,500; November, 1885, \$35,000; February, 1886, \$40,000. Corner of Cambridge and North Russell Streets, 1840, \$6,400; 1880, \$14,700.

The highest price ever paid for land in Boston, as far as I can learn, was that paid by Harvey D. Parker to Mr. T. O. H. P. Burnham, for the estate at the corner of Tremont and School Streets. There are 1,984 feet, and it brought \$200,000, or a little over \$100 per foot.

The cheapest land ever acquired, as far as I have ascertained, was acquired by Harrison Gray Otis, on the westerly slope of Beacon Hill, said to have been obtained by right of squatter sovereignty.

#### TOTAL VALUATION, CITY PROPER.

The following figures from the assessors' books will show the advance in real estate valuation from 1800 to 1885 :

1800 .....	\$6,901,000	1875.....	411,618,200
1820 .....	21,686,000	1879.....	340,480,900
1840 .....	60,424,200	1880.....	346,222,900
1860 .....	163,891,300	1885.....	390,815,700

Of this last amount, the Back Bay property so-called,) is \$43,000,000.

Real estate has always been a sure and safe investment in the long run. The old families of Boston owe much of their wealth of to-day to the steady, and in some instances enormous rise in the value of their houses and stores. To be sure there have been, and will be, periods of depression, when it would seem that the more real estate one has, the worse it is for him; but during all these depressions there is an undercurrent of growth that is quietly going on, which is sure to make itself felt when the tide turns and the clouds pass away.

I could go on indefinitely, giving examples of the great rise in the value of real property in Boston during this century. The assessors' valuation is not, indeed, a true valuation, but it is a guide, and the total valuation of the whole city tells the interesting story.

For the causes which have led to this result, we have not far to seek. With the opening of new lines of travel and the building of bridges to the neighboring towns, the trade and population at once began to increase. In 1800 there were but twenty stages running out of Boston; in 1806 there were thirty-five stages, and in 1847 two hundred and fifty stages and omnibuses. This appears to be the greatest number reached, for by that time seven railroads had forced their way into the city, and people from remote country towns found their way here every week instead of once a month as before, so that in that year, by both stages, omnibuses and railroads the passengers numbered daily 12,800.

Thus a new life was imparted to the growth of Boston, and this growth has been still further augmented each year up to the present time. The advent first of the bridges, and afterwards of the stages, omnibuses, railroads, street-cars, the telegraph and telephone, have all united to build up this prosperous city. The more people, the greater the demand for our houses, shops and warehouses.

Moreover, it did not take long for the wise men of Boston to see that it was destined to be the centre of trade for all



New England. Taking advantage of the great water courses that were close at hand, they acquired them, and built up prosperous towns and even cities, that have been, and are still, by their manufacturing industries, contributing to our own wealth.

And is not our future still as promising as the past? Are we not sure to go on growing and increasing in prosperity? Look around and see how we are pushing out in every direction. Go where you may, and you will see new streets, new blocks of houses, new shops, new life, a busy, bustling throng. Everything new! Yes, it seems the spirit of the age; the old must be forgotten. But no, let us not forget *all* of the old. Shall we ever lose the feeling of delight that we have, when by chance, we find the gates open so that we may quietly step in to the Granary or King's Chapel burial grounds, and linger over the quaint inscriptions on the headstones there? We have little left to remind us of our fathers and their early struggles, but let us hold fast to what we have.

It is the instinctive love for these few relics of the memorable past, that forms one of the well-springs of prosperity. They serve ever to remind us of the heroic period in the history of our native city, and as such ought to be preserved for the benefit of our children and future generations.

Our landmarks we must preserve. This venerable house, the old Church at the North End, Faneuil Hall, the Old South Church, the Granary, King's Chapel and Copp's Hill burying ground,—they are historical monuments and mementoes of Boston's past progress, patriotism and glory, that should never be effaced.

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THE CURTIS HOUSE AT JAMAICA PLAIN, AND THE APOSTLE  
ELIOT.

Within an easy walk of the centre of the city there still stands a relic of the past—an ancient residence, one of the oldest inhabited dwellings of the country. I refer to the Curtis house at Jamaica Plain.

Believing that a brief sketch of it may be interesting to the Society, I have gathered some information concerning it which I take pleasure in giving. The story has been told me by a member of the Curtis family, but for the most of it I am indebted to the notes of Benson J. Lossing, who has given such pleasant and faithful accounts of so many historical buildings and personages of America.

The Curtis house, shaded by a gigantic elm tree, stands on the banks of Stony Brook, near the Boylston station on the Boston and Providence Railroad. On March 13, 1638, the town of Boston gave William Curtis permission to build his house, which was finished and occupied by him in 1639. From that time till 1883 William Curtis's descendants have resided there. It is doubtful if there is another case on record where the same dwelling has been occupied by the same family for almost two hundred and fifty years. The region in which the Curtis house was built was then a heavily wooded country, abounding in wild deer, bears and wolves. In the old house, until a short time ago, might have been seen a pair of antlers, taken from the head of a buck that was shot from the door yard. Twenty years after the house was built twenty shillings were paid to William Curtis for shooting a wolf.

The great elm, it is said, was planted by one of the family a hundred years ago, but its doom is undoubtedly sealed, and like the Paddock elms, and those that have just been snatched from us in Pemberton Square, it soon must go. The timbers of the Curtis house are of massive oak, cut from the farm, and put together with wrought-iron nails. The building is two stories high, the roof sloping to the ground in the rear. The windows are small and set with small panes of glass, although originally the glass was diamond-shape and set in leaden sashes. The furniture was massive, and much of it came down from Pilgrim days through six generations.

It is well known that the Curtis house was the rendezvous of the distinguished men of the time, and no doubt John Winthrop, Thomas Dudley, Richard Bellingham, John Endi-



THE OLD CURTIS HOUSE,  
(Near Boylston Station,)  
JAMAICA PLAIN.



cott, John Leverett, William Dinsmore and Simon Bradstreet were frequent visitors there. Certain it is that the Apostle Eliot was closely identified with this famous mansion, as we shall presently see.

William Curtis, the original owner, was a native of Nasing, Essex County, England. He was born near Waltham Abbey, the remains of which stand on the banks of the Lea near London. This abbey and its neighborhood have a peculiar interest to American students of New England history. In the parish of Nasing, John Eliot, the apostle to the Indians, the translator of the Bible into the Indian tongue, who labored so long and faithfully among the heathen of New England, was born in 1604; and there William Curtis and Sarah, sister of the apostle, were married in 1618. Mr. Curtis and his family came to Boston in 1632, in the ship *Lyon*. They were accompanied by Mary Eliot, a young sister of Mrs. Curtis. There came also another young woman, who was a neighbor and friend of the Curtises. This was Anne Mountfort, the affianced of John Eliot, who had come over the year before. Believing in his goodness, she followed him, and they were married soon after her arrival. The Curtises and Eliots were thereafter closely identified, and the great preacher was a constant visitor at the Curtis mansion. I will not venture to go into an account of the earnest and faithful career of the good John Eliot, but an exceedingly interesting history of his life and labors was published in 1828, by William Oliphant, Edinburgh, to which those who are interested may refer.

As before mentioned, the Curtis house was built in 1639. General Washington occupied it for a short time at the beginning of the Revolutionary war. Among the numerous ancient dwellings still standing in New England may be mentioned the Craddock house at Medford, built in 1634; the Mudge house at Swampscott, also built in 1634; the Whittier house (the birthplace of the poet), Haverhill, and the Saltonstall house at Ipswich, both built in 1635; the Fairbanks house at Dedham, built in 1636; the Pierce house

at Dorchester, built in 1640; the Aspinwall house at Brookline, built in 1660; the Adams house at Quincy, built in 1720; the Longfellow house at Cambridge, built in 1735, and the "Old Manse" at Concord, built in 1775.

William Curtis was the ancestor of most of the persons of that name in the United States, and from him and Eliot have descended many persons of distinction. In every war of our country, descendants born in the old mansion have participated. Its association with remarkable events, its great age, and its perfection as a specimen of the second period of New England architecture, give to the Curtis house a rightful claim to a place among the historic buildings of America. It stands as a precious relic of the heroic age of our republic, and as such it ought to be preserved.

Let us while we may, do what we can to save it. Will not the lovers of these picturesque reminders of bygone days join in the effort?

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NOTE. The appeal was in vain, for since the above was written this famous old mansion has been demolished and the Curtis house is no more. But the beautiful elm still stands, and let us hope that it may long remain as a reminder of the past.





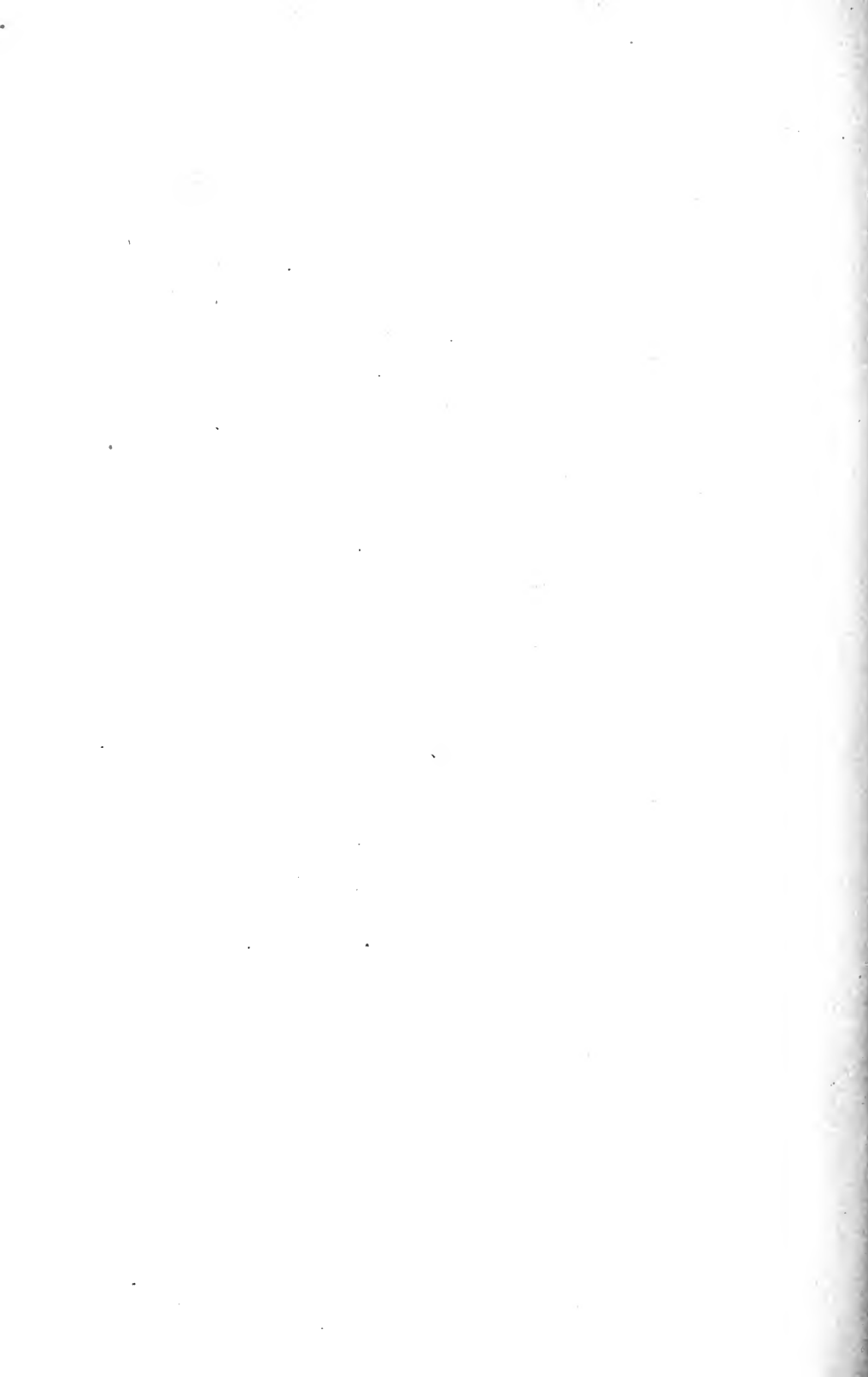


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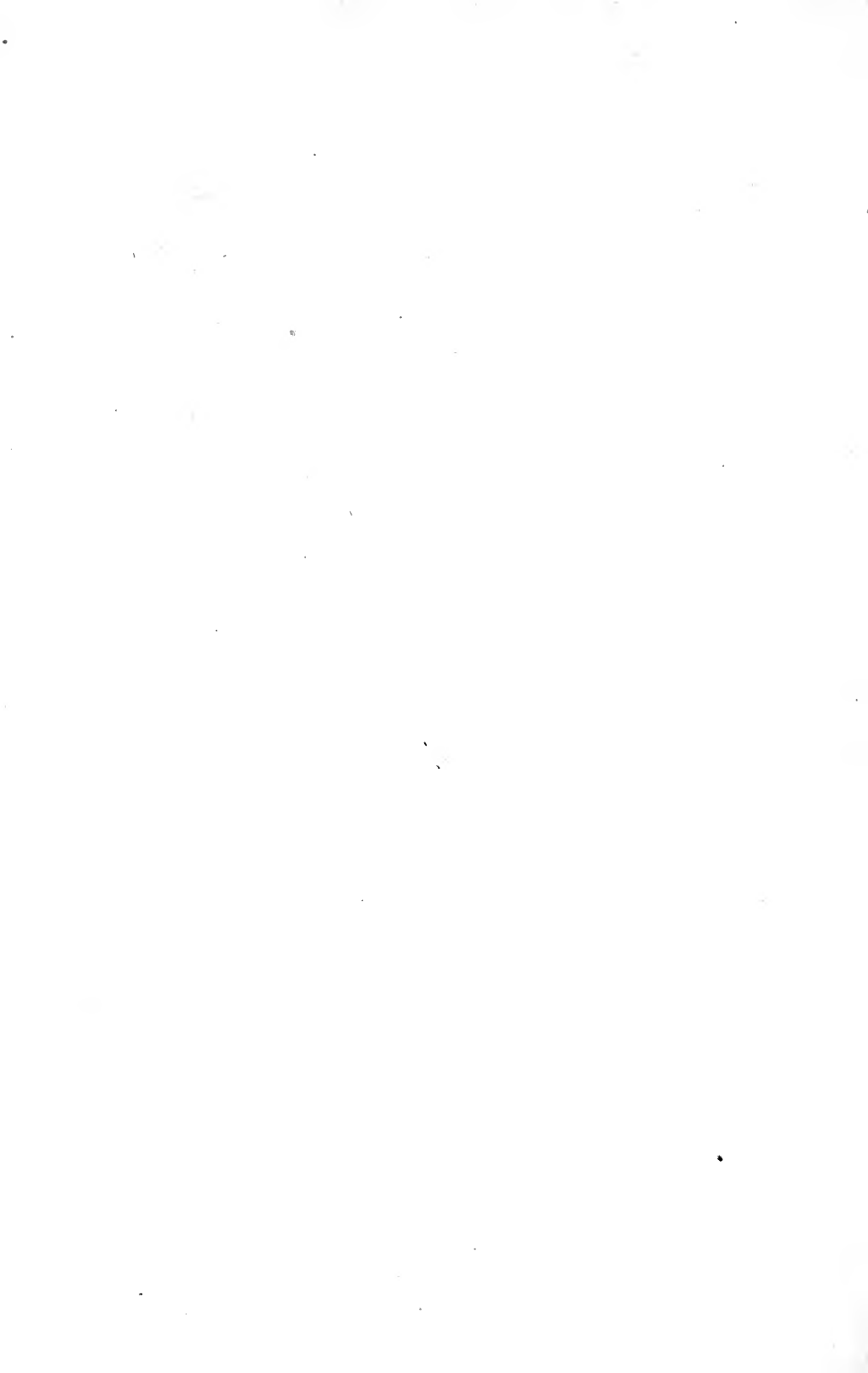
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